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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with five being the highest, what's your level of confidence in the ability of the CNMI economy to recover within the next three years?

Let your voice be heard!
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to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Gone Postal

A hospital worker shot and killed two employees and then killed himself at a medical center.

NATION...Page 10



Charice Shines

Charice sings the "Star Spangled Banner" at baseball's season-opener at Dodger Stadium.

MAHARLIKA...Page 15



Talented Susan

Neighbors knew Susan Boyle could sing, and now—with YouTube—just about everyone else does too.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

2 traditional sailing canoes arrive from Satawal. **PAGE 2**

DCCA to ask for special viewing for man'amko. **PAGE 3**

Fire hits auto shop junkyard

Blaze causes explosions, billowing black smoke

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A fire of still unknown cause burned some cars in a junkyard of an auto shop in Chalan Laulau yesterday afternoon, causing minor explosions and sending a thick cloud of black smoke into the air.

See **FIRE** on Page 4



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Thick black smoke billows over Beach Road as a fire engulfs old cars at Auto Motion Shop in Chalan Laulau shortly before 2pm yesterday. Explosions continued to be heard way after the fire started. Police have yet to determine the cause of the fire.

Money in the bag: CNMI gets \$90M

By **KRISTI EATON**
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REPORTER

The CNMI has received more than \$90 million in federal stimulus grant money, but now the difficult part of reporting begins.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the CNMI has received \$92 million so far in formula

See **MONEY** on Page 4

Delays in US visa distress scientists

Skilled alien workers left in limbo

By **EMILY WAX**
WASHINGTON POST FOREIGN SERVICE

NEW DELHI—When Surojit Sarkar got a call that his father had suffered a paralyzing stroke, he packed a small suitcase, kissed his wife and 10-month-old daughter, and rushed to the airport for the first leg of his flight from

See **DELAYS** on Page 4

Thousands pick up trash to clean up Saipan

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Close to 4,000 young and adults picked up tons of trash along Saipan's major roads, beaches, parks, dive sites and other tourist spots yesterday as part of the islandwide cleanup highlighting the observance of Environmental Awareness Month.

See **THOUSANDS** on Page 4



Terry Camacho, 62, of the Office of Personnel Management, picks up trash at the Garapan Fishing Base yesterday afternoon as part of the islandwide cleanup, in observance of Environmental Awareness Month in the CNMI. Inset, Department of Public Health employees pick up trash from the Bureau of Environmental Health office on Navy Hill to Horiguchi Building in Garapan and back.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Local

2 traditional sailing canoes arrive from Satawal

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Two traditional canoes used for sailing long distances between islands will be among the special exhibits in next week's 28th Micronesian Flame Tree Arts Festival, according to Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Cecilia T. Celes.

Two such canoes, carrying master navigators and a number of their crew, arrived in the waters off Managaha yesterday, where they were welcomed by the department secretary and other officials.

It took the travelers eight days to sail from Satawal, an outer-

island of Yap, to the CNMI. Satawal is known for its master navigators.

Celes said the canoes and their crew will stay on Managaha Island until Thursday, April 23, when they are expected to sail to Susupe for the official start of the festival.

Yesterday, the secretary called on community members to show their respect to the Satawal culture and tradition by not invading the sanctity of the canoes while docked on Saipan waters.

Throughout the festival, guest navigators will demonstrate to the community the important pieces and unique composition of the traditional canoes, the art of building them, and the signif-

icance of their existence to the outer-island cultures.

"This is something very new

NMI receives grant to help those with HIV, AIDS

CNMI Delegate Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan announced yesterday the award of \$45,287 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to the Northern Marianas to help those living with HIV and AIDS.

The money goes to the CNMI Department of Public Health and will provide medical services and ancillary care to low-income HIV-positive individuals and their families.

"This grant will help our

neighbors with HIV and AIDS whose medical needs are greater than their ability to meet those needs," said Sablan. "I am heartened that with the help of this grant, the Department of Public Health will be able to continue its HIV and AIDS-related services in the Marianas."

to the festival. Master navigators will share and demonstrate to the people how to build these

voyaging canoes and the important role they play in their culture. We're very happy to

agency Act, the source of the grant, helps provide care and



Sablan

treatment for uninsured and underinsured individuals living with HIV and AIDS.

The monies may be used for primary medical care, HIV medications, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, oral health, case management, home health care, and

have these features as among the highlights of this year's festival," Celes said.

While on Managaha, police officers will help guard the sacred canoes.

See **CANOES** on Page 4

nutritional and rehabilitation services. The funds are also used to ensure access to antiretroviral and other drug therapies, including prophylaxis and treatment of opportunistic infections as well as combination antiretroviral therapies.

The CARE Act was signed into law in 1990. The act is named after Ryan White, an Indiana teenager whose struggle with AIDS brought HIV and AIDS into public awareness in the mid-1980s. (PR)

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ON DEATH OF AGING OFFICE CHIEF MACARANAS

DCCA to ask for special viewing for *man'amko*

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Residents of the Aging Center will have the chance to pay their last respects to their late director, Howard Macaranas, in a special viewing after the Department of Community and

Cultural Affairs approved the move in a meeting yesterday.

DCCA Secretary Cecilia T. Celes, in a gathering with nearly a hundred *man'amko*, disclosed that directors and administrators of the department's eight divisions decided to voluntarily contribute to the

Macaranas family by sponsoring the breakfast meal on the last day of his wake.

A liaison officer, tasked to directly coordinate the event with the family, was also named yesterday.

As of yesterday, Celes has yet to confirm if Macaranas' re-

mains will be buried on Tinian.

However, the decision to allow the *man'amko* to let them pay their last respects on Saipan was reached after considering the health of many of the *man'amko*.

Rose Mondala, acting director of the center, will organize the preparation of the sandwiches and soup as the *man'amko*'s contribution to the bereaved family. The funding for their contribution, she said, will come from the amount they got from fundraisers.

Macaranas died Thursday noon at the Commonwealth Health Center due to massive cerebral hemorrhagic stroke. He was 53.

Mondala described her late

boss as very considerate and supportive.



Macaranas

"He will always be remembered by the *man'amko*... especially now that we're starting to prepare for the *Mes Manamko* [Older Americans Month]," Mondala said, adding that Macaranas had made sure that all activities planned for the senior citizens will be carried out on the occasion.

Macaranas assumed the post

in January 2006.

The Aging Center has about 75 congregate members—those who come to the center daily—and 120 homebound clients.

Mondala said many of them were surprised at the sudden passing of their boss.

Saipan Tribune learned that Macaranas last reported for work Thursday last week.

He was admitted to the hospital's intensive care unit Monday morning and was confined for four days prior to his passing Thursday at 3:30pm.

Rep. Rosemond Santos helps offload some of the donated items from Hawaii entities to Saipan's public schools and the Commonwealth Health Center, at the FAS Moving and Storage yard in Lower Base yesterday morning. Reach Out Pacific, a non-profit organization, helped made the donations possible.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

**Books, toys, linens from Hawaii to help Saipan kids, CHC**

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO and KRISTI EATON**
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REPORTERS

Sick children at the Commonwealth Health Center will now have toys, games and books to play with thanks to a Hawaii senator and a local boy with a big heart.

A 20-foot container with 50 boxes of books, 19 bookshelves, 100 boxes of linens and 60 bags of toys is now on island, ready for distribution to Saipan public schools and the Commonwealth Health Center.

The donations were organized by Hawaii Rep. Glenn Wakai's Reach Out Pacific and Angel Ray Guerrero, a 14-year-old boy.

Reach Out Pacific is a non-profit organization which takes surplus medical and educational supplies from Hawaii to Pacific islands, including the CNMI, Guam, Palau, the Marshall Islands, Chuuk, Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei and the Philippines.

Guerrero spent a year-and-a-half at a hospital in Hawaii that had a playroom. The games, toys and TV helped pass the time for the kids, he said.

"They don't feel like they're sick. They feel like they're at home," Guerrero said. He added that he really enjoyed using the computers and watching DVDs to take his mind off of being in the hospital.

Guerrero began talking with Wakai about his idea to have a similar playroom at CHC. For now, there isn't a room available for the toys but the kids will still be able to use them.

"Now that it's coming through I'm really happy," Guerrero said yesterday as four trucks of toys were being unloaded at the hospital.

Before the toys were donated,

patients in the pediatric unit didn't have anything to keep them busy, said Gayline Blau, acting director of Nursing.

"I think it'll be very good for Pediatrics," she said, adding that she would speak with her boss to try to set up a playroom.

Children on average stay two-and-a-half days at the hospital, but some stay for more than six weeks, Blau said. She said the books are great so the kids can read or be read to.

She said CHC and Secretary of Public Health Joseph Kevin Villagomez are very appreciative of the effort.

Rep. Rosemond Santos, who oversaw the offloading of the container yesterday at the FAS Moving and Storage in Lower Base, said the donation is just one of many examples of "islanders helping out islanders."

"Despite the economic downturn, people still have a heart,

and that's important," Santos told *Saipan Tribune*.

Santos said the container arrived on Saipan on April 10, and was offloaded yesterday. She and her staff started bringing the items to the Public School System and CHC yesterday.

"The linens are for the hospital, while the bookshelves and books are for PSS. The toys will be for the patients in the pediatric unit of CHC. The toys were donated with the help of Angel Ray Guerrero," Santos added.

She said she is thankful for Reach Out Pacific for finding ways to help out the CNMI's children and hospital.

Matson Navigation shipped the donated items free of charge, as part of their community service, Santos said.

Reach Out Pacific said the U.S. Bankruptcy Court donated the shelves as they move to storing more of their docu-

ments electronically. Shriner's Hospital is undergoing renovations and had to dispose of a large volume of children's clothing and toys, which have already reached Saipan. The hundreds of books came from Moanalua High School, while the 2,000 linens not used by Waikiki hotels will cover Saipan's hospital beds.

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DELAYS

From Page 1

Atlanta to India. Sarkar, an only child, wanted to be by his father's bedside, prepared for the worst.

Sarkar thought he would be in New Delhi for just a few weeks. Now, more than three months later, his father is in physical therapy, but Sarkar is still here, trapped in administrative limbo over his U.S. work visa status. He says consular agents flagged his visa renewal application for security reasons.

Sarkar is one of thousands of highly skilled scientists, professors and technology workers from Beijing to Belarus who have been stranded in their home countries in recent months, upsetting their lives, their jobs and their children's schooling. Many wonder whether the United States still wants its foreign scientists.

"When I said I have a PhD and worked with vaccines, the visa officer abruptly stopped what he was doing. I must have uttered a keyword for some security threat," said Sarkar, 36, a U.S.-educated scientist who works on HIV vaccines at Emory University's School of Medicine. He is a legal immigrant and has been a U.S. taxpayer for more than a decade.

"I totally understand the need for careful screening of visa applicants for protecting the nation. But I just want to go back to my family and my research.



Scientists Sanjeev Mathur, left, wife Deepika Mohan and Surojit Sarkar faced long waits for their work visas when they came home to India to see family.

THE WASHINGTON POST

I've already missed my only daughter's first steps and her first birthday."

Delays have increased because of rising demand for U.S. visas all over the world, said David Donahue, deputy assistant secretary of state for visa services.

The middle class is growing rapidly in India, China, Mexico and Brazil; as more people are able to travel and study abroad, the average wait for a U.S. visa has risen to about three months, Donahue said. His office does not publicize the total number of visa applicants being screened for security reasons. But several thousand have joined a Facebook support group about the issue.

"We have now hired additional staff, and wait times are starting to fall. We hope to have wait times for cases requiring processing down to about four to six weeks by the end of summer. But we completely understand the concerns," Donahue said in a telephone interview. "We know it's really difficult when you've been in a job, have a family and rent."

For scientists such as Sarkar, the problems began when the United States stepped up security checks after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, especially for those working in scientific and technological fields that the government deems "highly sensitive." Wait times initially spiked but dipped after about a year.

Aman Kapoor of ImmigrationVoice.com, a nonprofit organization, said

the increase in wait times is making it tougher for some of the world's smartest and best-educated scientists to work and live in the United States.

"These are top scientists and engineers," he said. "Ultimately, all of these delays only hurt the U.S. economy."

Over fresh lime sodas and thick folders containing their legal documents, more than 25 stranded scientists and technology workers recently gathered to share stories of being put on unpaid leave or of missing medical treatments and business meetings.

Deepika Mohan's 11-year-old son missed so much school waiting for her visa situation to clear that he was set back a year. Mohan works outside Boston, inventing medical diagnostic instruments.

"My son has been sitting idle for four months," she said, her voice cracking. She and her family recently obtained their visas. But her son, who had not enrolled in an Indian school because the family did not know how long it would be stranded, lost the year of school.

Although their employers are anxious to get them back to work, Sarkar and others said, they will not wait forever, especially in a strained economic climate. "I have lived most of my adult life in the U.S., and now that feels like home to me," Sarkar said. "I feel stranded here without even a driver's license and a bank account. If I lose my job, that's another house in foreclosure."

THOUSANDS

From Page 1

"I hope this day will make a difference for the environment and our children," said 62-year-old Terry Camacho of the Office of Personnel Management. "I hope that next time somebody throws trash anywhere, he would think twice and think about those who are cleaning up the environment."

Camacho was among the OPM employees and their families who picked up trash at the Garapan Fishing Base starting at 2:30pm yesterday.

Just a few meters from her was 4-year-old Ila Seman, the youngest of the OPM employees' family members to take part in the activity.

"Please do not throw your trash anywhere," Joannie Laniyo, 7, said as she tagged along with her mother, OPM employee Benita Seman, for the cleanup.

From 7am to 4:30pm, thousands of volunteers from the private sector and the local and federal government cleaned Saipan of litter—from cigarette butts, plastic bottles, soda and beer cans, plastic bags to soiled baby diapers.

Michael Lizama, 12, a seventh grader at Hopwood Junior High School, said most of what they picked up on campus and at the beach were cigarette butts and plastic bottles. His classmate, Alicia Lloren, 12, said she and her classmates are proud to be part of making their campus cleaner.

Hopwood Junior High School had the most number of cleanup participants at 1,113.

TJ Litulumar of the U.S. Transportation Security Administration joined eight other TSA employees in picking up trash at the beach side fronting the Quarter Master Road intersection all the way to the 13 Fishermen Monument and back.

"We're supposed to clean up only from 9am to 11am but it's now around 12," said Litulumar, adding that this is part of TSA's community outreach programs.

Mariana Coats and Jeremy T. Sasamoto of the Department of Public Health said they didn't mind the heat and dust to be able to help clean up Saipan. DPH employees picked up trash from Navy Hill to Horiguchi Building and back, starting at 2:30pm.

"Many of what we picked up were

beer cans and plastic bottles. I hope people will stop littering," said Sasamoto.

Aya Matsumoto, vice president of Pacific Eagle Enterprises, said they started cleaning up the area around the 13 Fishermen's Monument on Beach Road at 9:30am.

"We also planted a flame tree. We'd like to show tourists that Saipan is clean and beautiful. We'd like tourists to come back to the island again," she said.

The cleanup will continue today. Joleen Torres, from the Committee to Elect Juan "Pan" Guerrero and Joe Camacho, said they expect 45 volunteers to clean up Beach Road this morning.

Joe Kaipat of the Division of Environmental Quality and co-chair of the islandwide cleanup, said 55 volunteer groups including public and private schools, government agencies and private businesses took part in the cleanup of 48 sites around Saipan.

The islandwide cleanup is cosponsored by Beautify CNMI, the Division of Environmental Quality, Rotary Club of Saipan, Marianas Visitors Authority and the Marianas Tourism Education Council.

CANOES

From Page 2

Uniting the rainbows of arts and cultures

Despite the economic hardships, DCCA vows to present a memorable festival this year, with the annual float competition, parade of cultures, entertainment and performances, and special live art demonstrations.

This year, DCCA slashed by \$50 the rate charges for artists and food vendors. As of yesterday, all booths were confirmed fully booked for the four-day event.

Celes said all eight divisions of the DCCA, including the Aging Center, will be provided a free station at the festival ground to promote their programs, services, and products.

The opening ceremony on April 23 will start at 6pm all the way to 11pm. The same schedule is extended up to the second day, April 24.

On Saturday, the parade of cultures and the float competition will kick off at 9am through 11am. The celebration, however, will run through 11pm until the festival's finale on Sunday.

This year's theme is "Uniting the rainbows of arts and cultures." The Flame Tree Arts Festival will be held at the Susupe Civic Center.

Honoring the artists

DCCA will also honor three local artists who passed away this year: master sand painter Albert Toves, coconut hand carver Danny Babauta, and Tun Manet Dela Cruz.

There are also four schools competing in the float contest this year—Kagman Elementary, San Vicente Elementary, San Antonio Elementary School, and the Ladera International School of Saipan. Due to budget constraints, DCCA has shelved the booth competition this year.

Guests and participants from off-island included seven from Palau; 10 from Tinian; and 10 from Rota. Guam will be this year's biggest delegation with the expected participation of 115 individuals.

DCCA is paying for the ground transportation and food of all festival delegates.

The annual Flame Tree Arts Festival is the biggest arts and crafts gathering in Micronesia, drawing thousands of spectators from all over the islands.

MONEY

From Page 1

grant money, said Commerce Secretary Mike Ada.

Now the government is focusing on submitting applications for competitive grant money. The first application submitted was for a grant that would fund an additional 45 law enforcement officers in the Northern Marianas.

"So now we're just kind of waiting back to see how we do on the competitive side of things," said Ada, who leads the CNMI's effort for stimulus money.

He said his team will continue to file

applications for competitive grants but is also now focusing on reporting.

"Now we're more focused on the reporting," he said. "Now that we have the money there's another set of problems we have to address. That's kind of where we're going to start focusing our attention to now, so we walk away with clean audits, not engaging in grants we cannot commit to."

Some grants, he added, require the governor to maintain the efforts even after the granting period.

"That's something the governor needs to ensure that either A, we can do, or we notify the agency there may be a possibility we can't do that, and make that disclaimer up front. Because if you don't do those types of things,

we may be liable to paying back money we already spent."

Most people, Ada said, only look at the amount of money received. "They don't realize the conditions that come with that," he added.

He met with the Office of the Public Auditor recently who is also an important part of the effort, he said.

"Getting the money is the easy part. The hard part is maintaining the money and ensuring we're adhering to all the requirements. That, in itself, is another task we have to address," the Commerce Secretary said.

Also, Ada said any money received must be kept separate from the CNMI's general fund, and job creation and jobs saved must be accounted for.

FIRE

From Page 1

No one was injured in the blaze that was reported to the Department of Public Safety at 1:52pm, according to DPS spokesperson Eric David.

David told *Saipan Tribune* that employees of Auto Motion first noticed smoke coming from the back of their shop, where junk cars were kept.

The employees then saw one of the cars burning. A chain reaction ensued, with the blaze engulfing the other vehicles in the junkyard in no time.

David said initial investigation showed that the fire started between the auto shop and a hollow block company.

Police officers helped some residents

evacuate the area. Some people were seen pushing cars that were being repaired in the shop away from the site.

An auto shop employee said that yesterday's high temperature possibly triggered a grass fire in the area.

A resident said they first heard explosions, followed by thick black smoke billowing from behind the shop.

Firefighters later arrived as the black smoke blanketed a portion of Beach Road, slowing down traffic along a stretch of the highway.

It was not clear yet how many cars were burned.

A few months ago, a fire that started in an auto shop's junkyard in Chalan Laulau also blanketed a portion of Beach Road and Middle Road with thick smoke.

Fiji's military extends its grip on power



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Commanding Officer John Caskey, seaport manager Maryann Lizama, Coral Reef point of contact Fran Castro, CNMI Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan, LTJG Kyle Ryan, chief scientist Robert Schroeder, DEQ director Frank Rabauliman, and NOAA liaison for CNMI Jake Asher.

NOAA ship on Saipan

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are currently conducting tests and assessing coral reefs ecosystems as part of the bi-annual Marianas Reef Assessment and Monitoring program.

Approximately 20 scientists

are on board to conduct a rapid ecological assessment of the marine environment around Saipan, said Jacob Asher, CNMI scientific liaison for the NOAA's Coral Reef Ecosystem division, part of the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center.

The scientists are continuing stock assessments looking into coral reef ecosystems, algae, fish and clam populations, he

said. The information will be used to monitor trends, such as how fish populations are changing along coastal areas with large amounts of people versus less populated areas.

Guam, Rota and Tinian have already been surveyed. The scientists will next head to the Northern Islands and return to port on May 7, Asher said.

This is the fourth time scientists from the program have been here. They first came in 2003, Asher said.

SUVA, Fiji (AP)—Fiji's military government extended its grip on power Friday as a former army commander was sworn in as vice president of the volatile South Pacific nation.

Armed forces chief Commodore Frank Bainimarama, meanwhile, said the country should accept that he is in control and move on, following a week of turmoil in which the constitution was abolished and media freedoms squashed.

"There is no need to speculate as to what happened, how it happened, what should have happened or what should not have happened," Bainimarama said in a speech to public servants that was posted on the government's Web site.

Bainimarama, who seized power in a 2006 coup, said his government "is not interim nor is it a caretaker government" and would remain in power until elections in September 2014.

Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Fiji's military chief in the 1980s who has been a senior minister in Bainimarama's government, was sworn in Friday as vice president by President Ratu Josefa Iloilo.

The ceremony at Government House in the capital, Suva,

came one week after Iloilo abrogated the constitution, sacked the nation's judges and declared a state of emergency following an Appeal Court ruling that Bainimarama's government was illegal.

Iloilo reappointed Bainimarama as prime minister a day later, drawing international condemnation that a virtual military dictatorship had been created in Fiji.

Bainimarama's coup ousted an ethnic Fijian-dominated government and he has vowed to rewrite the constitution and electoral laws to remove what he says is discrimination against the country's large ethnic Indian minority before holding elections in 2014. Critics say he shows little sign of being willing to give up power.

While the office of president is largely ceremonial under the abolished constitution, Nailatikau's appointment puts another Bainimarama ally in a prime position to succeed the ailing Iloilo, 88.

Senior bureaucrats including the central bank governor have also been replaced this week.

Pressure is mounting among South Pacific nations to suspend Fiji from a key regional group,

as countries seek new ways to pressure Bainimarama to restore democracy quickly.

The head of the 16-nation Pacific Islands Forum, Toke Talagi, said Fiji should be suspended immediately, and New Zealand backed the idea.

Talagi said Fiji's suspension would mean moving the group's secretariat from Suva and would pose major problems for smaller nations such as Tuvalu and Kiribati.

The regional trade and diplomatic group had already threatened to suspend Fiji from May 1.

But the idea has failed in the past in part because Fiji has the huge and sparse region's largest air and sea ports, and smaller island states rely on those services for basic necessities such as fuel and food.

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key said Fiji's suspension from the forum was a matter of time unless there was "some miraculous turnaround" and that if the forum wanted to do it immediately, "New Zealand is likely to support that call."

Paul Reeves, the British Commonwealth's special envoy to Fiji, said the 53-member organization was also considering suspending Fiji's membership and would take its lead from the Pacific forum.



Bainimarama



11TH CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION BOARD MEETING



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2009, 1:30 p.m.¹
Pacific Islands Club Napu Room, SAIPAN

- I. Preliminary**
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes
 - i. 02-25-2009 SBOE Meeting
- II. Public Comments²**
- III. Reports**
 - a. Chair
 - b. Board Committees
 - i. CIA
 - ii. CIP
 - iii. FPA
 1. Meeting of 3-4-09
 2. Meeting of 3-23-09
 3. Meeting of 4-7-09
 4. Meeting of 4-17-09
 - iv. LIA
 1. HR 1324 to Amend Child Nutrition Act of 1966
 - v. School Reform
 - vi. Special Education & Early Childhood
 - vii. Private Schools & Non-Public School Representative
 - viii. Student Representative
 - c. Commissioner of Education
 - i. Head Start Monthly Report
 - ii. Financial Reports – Local & Federal
 1. FY 2009 Adjusted Spending Plan per PL 16-32
 - iii. Other Matters
 1. ACT Meeting
 2. Additional time for ELL (PLNE) test takers
 3. Governor's letter to President re ARRA
 4. Tinian High School Transformer Update
 5. Retirement Issues
- IV. Old Business**
 - a. Adoption of Proposed Rules and Regulations re Amendments to HQC published in the 2-25-09 Commonwealth Register
 - b. Adoption of Proposed Rules and Regulations re Special Education Hard to Fill Pay Differential published in the 2-25-09 Commonwealth Register
- V. New Business**
 - a. CNMI-wide Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP)
 - b. Ratification of ARRA SFSF Grant Application (PSS Stimulus)
 - c. Approval of \$20M CIP Plan for ARRA Tax Credit Bond
 - d. Approval of revised Standards and Benchmarks
 - e. Approval of 2010 Head Start Grant Application
 - f. Annual Report for 2008
 - g. Ratification of LIA Comments re HR 1324 to Amend Child Nutrition Act of 1966
 - h. Approval of Building Lease for Additional Space on 2nd Floor (Retirement)
 - i. Setting of Goals and Objectives for 2009-2010
 - j. System-wide Evaluation (BOE, PSS, COE)
- VI. Executive Session³**
 - a. Legal Updates
 - b. Personnel
 - c. Other Matters
- VII. Miscellaneous Matters**
 - a. Setting of BOE Committee meeting times
 - b. Setting of BOE regular and special meeting times
 - c. Trip Report – 20th Annual Service Learning Conference
 - d. Trip Report – Collaborate for Success Action Clinic re US Apprenticeship Program
 - e. Trip Report – NSBA Conference, San Diego
- VIII. Discussion of Agenda for Next Board Meeting**
- IX. Adjournment**

¹In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.

²Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.

³Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT/ NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING KALABERA CAVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT MARPI, SAIPAN

Notice is hereby given that the Department of Public Works in conjunction with CRM, DPL, DEQ, HPO and FWL are making available for public review and comment a Draft Environmental Assessment Report (DEAR) prepared for the proposed Kalabera Cave Development Project proposed by the government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Tile Marianas Visitors Authority is the project sponsor. The project is federally funded by the United States Department of the Interior (DOI), Office of Insular Affairs for Capital Improvement Projects under Section 118 of Public Law 104-134, and is pursuant to Article XIV Section 3 of the NMI Constitution including the NMI Historic Preservation Act of 1982, Public Law 3-39.

The project is designed to meet or exceed tile requirements of local and federal laws, and construction includes car and bus parking, pathway, resting house, house of prayer, pictograph Interpretive house, and cave interior lighting.

An Environmental Assessment Report (EAR), which is a written document that discusses the potential environmental effects of the project and feasible mitigation measures to reduce those effects to less-than-significant levels, is proposed for certification by the Commonwealth pursuant to the NEPA and NHPA Guidelines. Possible environmental impacts of this project include impacts upon or related to aesthetics, transportation, air quality, noise, cultural and historical resources, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, hazardous materials, and public utilities and service systems. Responsible and trustee agencies and those who have already expressed an interest in this matter will automatically receive a copy of the Draft EAR; for other interested persons, copies of the Draft EAR may be requested from the Department of Public Works at the address and telephone number given below or from Herman B. Cabrera & Associates at the address and telephone number given below. The 30-day review period for the Draft EAR is from April 7, 2009 to May 7, 2009. During this period, comments may be submitted to the Department of Public Works at the address given below, in either writing or by e-mail, or comments may be made during the public hearing, the date and location of which is described below.

Said public hearing where all interested members of the public may attend and be heard will be held on Friday, the 24th day of April 2009, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the Gregorio Camacho Elementary School Cafeteria in San Roque, Saipan. This hearing will be for acceptance of public comments on the Draft EAR by DPW staff or staff from Herman B. Cabrera & Associates. No decision regarding the project or certification of the EAR will be made at this meeting. A final decision on this project will be made at a future date at a meeting of the Department of Public Works, who would also consider certification of the EAR at that time. All persons interested in the matter may appear and be heard at this meeting.

Copies of the Draft EAR in spiral bound form may be obtained in person from:

Department of Public Works
Technical Service Division,
Joeten Building, 2nd Floor,
San Jose Village
Saipan,
MP 96950.
Tel: 670-234-9828/38

and

Herman B. Cabrera & Associates
P.O. Box 501421
Garapan Village
Saipan, MP 96950
Attn: Herman B. Cabrera, AIA President
E-Mail: hbcabrera@gmail.com
Tel: 670- 234-1778

A copy will be charged at the nominal rate of \$0.20 per sheet.

A copy of the document may also be viewed at:

Joeten Kiyu Public Library
Susupe
Saipan, MP 96950

Comments on the Draft EAR should be submitted to the Department of Public Works or to Herman B. Cabrera & Associates at the e-mail address or his address above. Comments on the Draft EAR must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 7, 2009.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950Lynn Knight PUBLISHER
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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Common sense on Cuba

The Obama administration has taken an important first step toward overhauling a 50-year-old failed Cuba policy by lifting restrictions on family visits and remittances to the island, as well as laying the groundwork for improved telecommunications to increase contact. The interests of democracy have never been served by keeping Cuban Americans from their relatives, just as the U.S. trade embargo has never led to regime change.

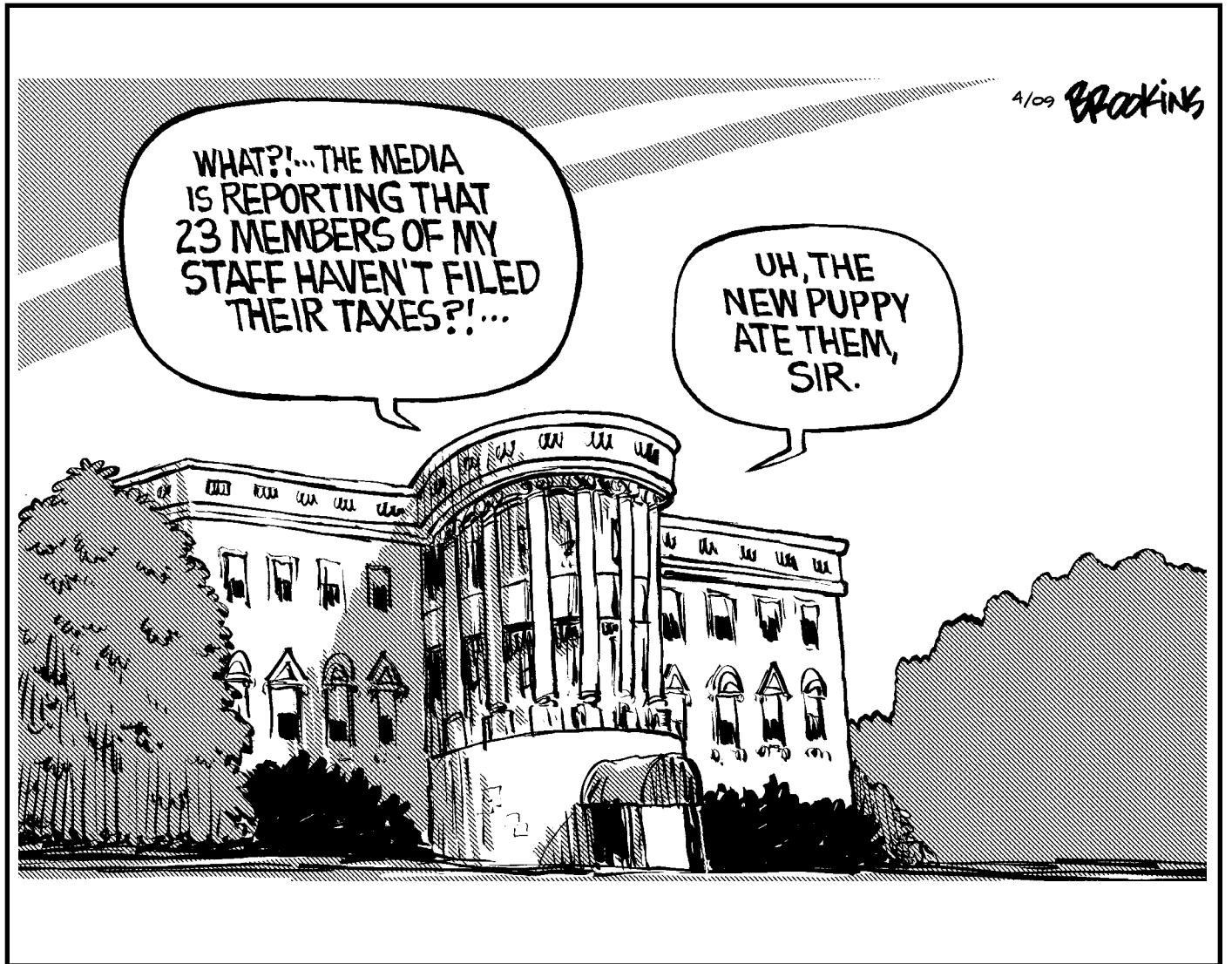
The Obama policy allows Cuban Americans to visit Cuba as often and for as long as they please, and it removes limits on the frequency and amount of money they can send to relatives, as long as those relatives are not prominent members of the government or the Cuban Communist Party. Banks and other institutions will be licensed to forward remittances, and U.S. telecommunications network providers will be allowed to enter into agreements to establish links.

These welcome humanitarian developments should mark the beginning of a new approach to relations between the two countries. But there are further steps to be taken to strengthen those ties. The White House said there are "no better ambassadors for freedom than Cuban Americans." What about other Americans who would like to travel to Cuba, although they don't have family there? The ban on travel to the island should be lifted altogether. And more important, what about the trade embargo? Nothing speaks for our way of life better than our way of life; the embargo merely denies Cubans the opportunity to appreciate this country in all its diversity and ingenuity.

We share the administration's goals of political and economic reform in Cuba. We would like to see respect for human rights and free and fair elections there. And like most of Latin America, we think the best way to pursue those long-term goals is through constructive engagement with the Cuban government. We hope the Castro regime will acknowledge these overtures and reciprocate in some way. (How about letting dissidents out of jail?) At the very least, it should accept the telecommunications agreements that will help Cubans connect to the outside world.

But even if the regime balks, Obama should commit the U.S. to more open relations, overcome the objections of some members of Congress and initiate a dialogue with the Cuban government of the sort he has proposed for other problematic regimes. Contact and openness should lead to familiarity and dislodge outdated antagonisms, and eventually force the lifting of the ineffective embargo. That will be a day for both countries and their citizens to celebrate.

(c) 2009, Los Angeles Times



Write away, student journalists

By JAMES RAINEY
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Not so long ago, a journalism foundation surveyed American high school students and found about half believed the government legally could censor the Internet. Three-quarters expressed ambivalence toward the First Amendment. More than one-third said it went too far in guaranteeing our most basic rights.

What's afoot in the land of Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson? We'd like to be nurturing the next Edward R. Murrow, but it sounds like we've got a bunch of kids auditioning to be Robert Mugabe's information minister. Frightening.

Some of us were lucky to be soaked in the values of free speech and a free press when we were young. It happened at the high school paper, where we wrote not only about bad cafeteria food and sewer sliding, but the evils of apartheid and the need to integrate our student government.

High school journalism has suffered some blows in the three decades since I was editor of my school paper.

When schools cut electives, some papers disappeared. There's less money, so many publish once a month or less, instead of weekly, as we did at Santa Monica High School.

The sheen of those post-Watergate days has faded too, so fewer young people seek the thrill of sitting down with the principal or superintendent and demanding answers: Why can't we have more Advanced Placement classes? Do you really think you can pacify the students by emptying the vending machines of Mountain Dew?

This could all be pretty dispiriting, but a couple of recent developments give me hope that student newspapers will continue to cajole, inspire and have a little fun along the way.

A new California state law prohibits administrators from retaliating against advisers who try to protect student press freedom. And a nonprofit has spelled out plans to help students distinguish fact from the furious fulminations that, more and more often, pose as news.

Democratic State Sen. Leland Yee sponsored the Journalism Teacher Protection Act because too many school principals retaliate against energized journalism students by exiling their best teachers to driver's education or freshman English.

Accounts of such puny, punitive actions are legion.

Administrators at South East High School in South Gate, near downtown Los Angeles, booted journalism adviser Darryl Adams a couple of years ago after he supported a student whose editorial contended that random drugs and weapons searches were conducted unevenly.

The bosses at Rialto High School east of L.A. about halfway to the desert told Rick Whited his student journalists were "too nega-

tive," pushing him out as adviser even after he offered the creative compromise of teaching a separate class in public relations.

Janet Ewell's crime at Orange County's Rancho Alamitos High School? Letting her students write about filthy bathrooms, bad cafeteria food and teachers who did not make enough time to help students. She got the boot in 2002.

(Administrators overseeing those teachers either could not be reached or declined to comment.)

People supporting the Yee legislation compiled 15 stories about high school journalism advisers being pushed aside. Doubtless many others have not come forward for fear of being reassigned, or worse.

Charismatic teachers often get replaced by someone with less verve or less experience and almost certainly less stomach for pushing student rights.

I'd like to think administrators crack down only when students write something truly disruptive. But in nearly three decades of newspapering, I've dealt with too many principals and superintendents who tend toward the officious and hidebound. (Why are they always the ones who, armed with featherweight Ph.D.s, insist on being called "Doctor"?)

Ewell said she has seen poor rural and urban schools, typically with large immigrant populations, frequently lose out when journalism is cut back.

"And they are kids who most need to come to understand First Amendment freedoms," Ewell said, "to understand they can have a voice."

Since the principal pushed Adams out as adviser to South East High's Jaguar Times—where the students are the sons and daughters of working-class Hispanics—journalism enrollment has dropped to about one-quarter of what it once was. After changing to another new adviser, Rialto High has not printed a paper this school year.

The founder of the News Literacy Project thinks the explosion of news on the Internet makes this a time when students need more, not less, understanding of how to find the truth.

Beginning next month with pilot efforts in New York and Maryland, the project will send professional journalists to teach middle- and high-school students how to "distinguish verified information from raw messages, spin, gossip and opinion," said Alan Miller, a former Los Angeles Times reporter who conceived the project.

Amen. Maybe when it spreads the curriculum around the country (as planned), it will begin to put a dent in those e-mails I keep getting from those happy dunderheads who just know something is true because "It's all over the blogs."

Then, if we can get a few more kids in journalism classes, their teachers protected from censorship by The Man, we might see a few more high schoolers agreeing that old First Amendment is pretty cool after all.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Autism advocacy: An invitation to an open house

The openness we are promoting with our Saturday Autism Open House in the FS360 Training Center at the NMPA-SI offices on Pale Arnold Rd. (previously, Middle Road), where children's and their family's photos are on display is not by any means a fully done deal, universally accepted as an operating context among its targeted participants.

At this time, it is simply an invitation for members of the Autism Society and others with disabilities and disorders to move out of the shadows and objectively recognize without apologies the conditions of their diagnosis of "neurological disorders, mental and physical disabilities" under the full light of day. The reluctance remains formidable as it is deeply rooted in culture and history. This openness, however, moves the conversation out of the exclusiveness and hidden-ness of the "set-aside" conditions, the "thingification of life," into the mainstream of wholesome "human nature" experience, dialogue and discourse!

It is also an invitation for families and the affected individuals to be their own advocates in meeting their own requirements. Dependence on social services has been the order of the day, and families either rely on the service providers to be benevolent in addressing their needs, or assume that they would be relentless advocates for them in the bar of public opinion and in the legal salas of judicial deliberations.

The numerous and diverse members of the Autism Society precludes the kind of activism that can capture the passion of the individual members. The Society serves as a formal umbrella organization, but the fire that fuels actions are the small groups and personal relationships that develops among its members. To be sure, at the policy and program levels, an organized group can be an illuminating finger to focus direction, an effective vessel for funding and an efficient vehicle for implementation, but the awakened and alert parents/guardians and affected individuals thinking and acting in concert is an irreplaceable advocate for their own cause. The synergy among a few has been known to be the most potent form of protection and advocacy of a group's interest.

The power of fellowship as a primal network is a human invention from the time of the hunter-gatherer to the present. Thinking

together is a good start.

Autism Studies

Published report in the media about autism and other neurological disorders (e.g. ADD/ADHD) are not always clear because the conditions themselves are better defined on the broad rather than on the specifics. Neurological Disorders (NDs) are often described as having "no known cause and no known cure." Most alarming in the last decade has been the hurried claims by public research agencies that any link between vaccines and NDs is inconclusive or has been "disproven."

As advocates, the testimony of parents and affected individuals based on experience, is incontrovertible. For instance, the evidence supporting the position that NDs are environmental illnesses with vaccines as a primary trigger is widely narrated and well documented. The number of published documentations in peer-reviewed journals is growing every day.

Of the wisdom gleaned from research, we consider the following to be pertinent and relevant.

■ The scientific debate regarding the genetic v. environmental cause of autism is leaning heavily on the latter. The prevalence of neurological disorders amongst children is growing at an alarming rate, which can only mean that the environment is playing a bigger role because genetic conditions can only grow at the rate of population growth.

■ When environmental toxicity in children with neurological disorders is measured, it is meaningfully higher than normal children.

■ The brains of children with neurological disorders are experiencing severe oxidative stress and inflammation, suggesting an environmental cause.

■ Children with neurological disorders are often suffering from severe gastrointestinal distress and inflammation. The MMR vaccine is widely claimed as a trigger of this inflammation and its resultant behaviors.

■ Thimerosal (mercury), a preservative used in vaccines, enters the bloodstream of the child and ends up in the brain. Higher levels of environmental mercury have been shown to produce higher rates of autism. The reverse is equally true, i.e., California claims that

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section.



there has been a 50 percent decrease in the incidence of autism since the toxic preservative has been withdrawn from the vaccine.

■ While reaction to toxins may vary greatly, the preservatives in vaccines, most notably thimerosal and aluminum, are highly toxic and damaging to the nervous and immune systems of a developing child. The symptoms of autism and the symptoms of mercury poisoning are very similar.

■ The Government Reform Committee of the U.S. Congress has published reports on the relationship between mercury and autism and on the conflicts in vaccination policy-making.

With the recently launched 18-month journey of a Commonwealth Autism Commission, it is incumbent on passionate individuals to be proactive and not wait to be invited to have their voices heard. Rumors of impending litigation on the aforementioned preservative is rampant, nationally and locally, and it is to the affected families' interest to stay tuned to developments.

This Autism Awareness month had not been bereft of powerful advocates. The broadcast media have all run special programs, and the White House itself has held special events. For the autism community, this is no longer a time of despair over the paucity of friends and resources; it is rather a time of opportunities and possibilities.

The larger support net for long-term advocacy for persons with "special needs" is a continuing preoccupation of the AS-CNMI as a fellowship and NMPASI (235-7273/4) as a network resource.

Be proactive. Come to the Open House today. Connect. Relate. Advocate.

A conversation with John Williamson, economist

By **CARLOS LOZADA**

(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Finance ministers have decried it. Protesters have rallied against it. And at the G20 summit in London, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown declared it dead. But is the "Washington Consensus" really gone? Not if you ask John Williamson, the soft-spoken British economist who coined the term 20 years ago—and has been under fire ever since. How did a wonky paper outlining 10 recommendations on fiscal discipline and open markets become such a lightning rod? Williamson spoke last week with *The Washington Post* Outlook section's Carlos Lozada about what caused the financial crisis and how, whatever Brown says, the Washington Consensus is alive and well—just check out the G20 communique. Excerpts:

Q. Where were you when Gordon Brown declared that your "old Washington Consensus is over"? Did you watch it on TV?

A. I was in the Galapagos. I did not watch it on TV; I did have Internet access in the Galapagos so I was able to read about it.

Q. Were you angry? Amused?

A. People have been saying the Washington Consensus is dead for about twenty years now, ever since it was first created. My reaction was more amusement than anger, but it was a combination of the two.

Q. So is Brown right?

A. It depends on what one means by the Washington Consensus. If one means the ten points that I tried to outline, then clearly it's not right. If one uses the interpretation that a number of people—including Joe Stiglitz, most prominently—have foisted on it, that it is a neoliberal tract, then I think it is right.

Q. How would you summarize it?

A. (It) involved macroeconomic discipline, including fiscal discipline, which was a particular problem in Latin America. And then it involved using the market economy, not setting it up on a totem pole as some ideal that must never be interfered with, but recognizing that there were serious limitations on the market economy. And third was globalization, free trade, absorbing oneself into the global economy.

Q. Is the Washington Consensus in any way to blame for the global financial crisis?

A. I think that would be pushing it. If you read the communique following the London summit, you'll find that three of the things

they agreed on were very much the things I have used to summarize the Washington Consensus. It starts off with globalization, it also mentions the market economy. Fiscal discipline comes later; it's in paragraphs 10 and 11 rather than right at the beginning, because that's not the immediate problem.

Q. If the Washington Consensus isn't to blame, what is?

A. I think it was a very bad system of regulation of the financial sector which made the crisis so deep. I think there would have been a crisis in any event. Capitalism has been characterized by ups and downs over the last two hundred years, so eventually there will come a down. What worries me about the present reform agenda is that I really don't see that they've yet decided on the form of regulation that they need. Simply applying the system of regulation that was there before to more institutions—to big hedge funds—is not going to alter things.

Q. One of the ten points you promoted in the Washington Consensus was deregulation.

A. I was talking about abolishing barriers to entry and exit. People should be free to enter an industry or trade if they wanted to in the same way they could close an enterprise if they found it wasn't profitable.

Q. Since you wrote the Washington Consensus paper in 1989, the concept has been vilified as a market-fundamentalist manifesto that worsens the plight of the poor. When did you realize that you'd gone from think tank wonk to global whipping boy?

A. I suppose it was in a conference in Washington in the early 1990s, mainly with political scientists, when they began referring to "orthodox views." I asked what are the orthodox views, and I was told, "You are the orthodoxy!"

The other incident that I recall clearly occurred in Washington in 1993 but concerns a Brazilian, an ex-finance minister called Luiz-Carlos Bresser Pereira. He told me that just because I had invented the term, (that) did not give me the right to say what it meant. He still believes this and is still attacking it, as he told me two weeks ago when I was in Sao Paulo.

Q. Where did the term "Washington Consensus" come from?

A. I think I dreamt it up.

Q. In the original paper, you wrote that "left-wing believers" in Keynesian stimulus are "almost an extinct species." They certainly don't seem extinct today. Has Washington or the world tilted left?

A. The world has changed. We are now in a Keynesian situation, which we weren't in 1989.



Williamson

Q. Do you think President Obama is a Washington Consensus-type guy?

A. I haven't become aware yet of any great contradiction.

Q. But he has criticized the consensus as a "cookie-cutter model."

A. The assumption is that anyone who believes in the Washington Consensus felt that if you did those ten things you would solve all problems. That certainly wasn't my belief, and I don't think most people who accepted this as a useful guide would think that this solved all problems and that one should apply it in the same way to all situations.

Q. If you had to identify one country that is implementing the Washington Consensus and benefiting from it, which would it be?

A. I think Chile has implemented that type of policy over the years, in a very non-dogmatic way since the return of democracy. Clearly those principles have been there, and it's done extremely well. I think Brazil, although the president would hate to be accused of following these policies, but substantively he has done so. It was a great credit to Lula that he didn't throw out all the policies of the previous administration but decided to maintain continuity where continuity was merited.

Q. What did you make of his comment that the crisis can be blamed on white people with blue eyes?

A. Ha! I don't know about the blue eyes, but I think it is true that they were mostly white. ... It's absolutely true that this crisis originated in the developed world, not the developing world, which everyone had come to assume was the natural epicenter of all crises. It certainly wasn't with this one, which is by far the biggest crisis.

Q. Is the Washington Consensus the most important thing you've written?

A. My work on exchange rates is what I've always regarded as my primary contribution. But the world ignores it.

Q. Was writing the Washington Consensus worth all the trouble?

A. I've asked myself that question. The plus is that, of course, it's made me famous. The minus is that I'm not sure the phrase really was conducive to promoting reform, which was the object of the exercise. Certainly the word "Washington" did not help.






For a longer version of this interview, go to washingtonpost.com/outlook.

John Williamson is a senior fellow at the Institute for International Economics, a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan research institution devoted to the study of international economic policy.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

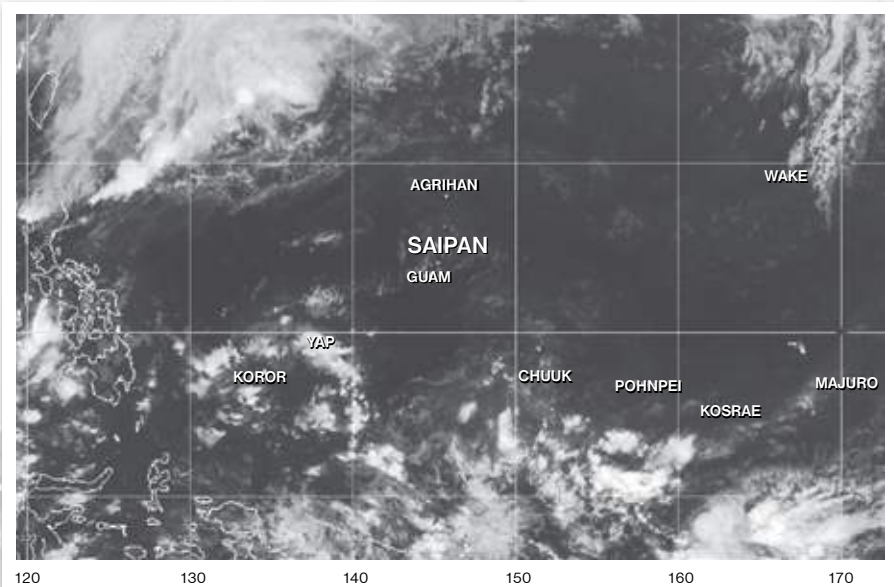
TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲86 ▼75
Palau	Rain	▲84 ▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88 ▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲87 ▼75
Kosrae	Rain	▲87 ▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲85 ▼78

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Cloudy	▲67 ▼60
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲68 ▼55
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲79 ▼73
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲79 ▼67
London	Cloudy	▲59 ▼41
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲84 ▼56
Manila	Showers	▲86 ▼77
Melbourne	Sunny	▲70 ▼54
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲79 ▼67
New York	Partly Sunny	▲76 ▼48
Osaka	Sunny	▲71 ▼54
Paris	Showers	▲65 ▼43
Pusan	Sunny	▲75 ▼51
Rome	Showers	▲67 ▼52
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲68 ▼38
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲72 ▼52
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲70 ▼49
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲70 ▼53
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲78 ▼51

Tides		
Saipan Harbor		
3:24 AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
8:46 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
12:46 PM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
8:35 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A nearly stationary front enters the discussion area at 25N143E and extends southwestward to beyond 130E at 21N. Cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 400 miles north of the front. A near-equatorial trough extends southeastward from just south of Mindanao through 3N130E to end at 1N137E. A surface trough extends northward from 3N135E to Koror, Palau to end near 10N137E. Trade winds converging north of the near-equatorial trough and in the vicinity of the trough near Koror are creating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms across an area bounded by a line from 8N131E to 10N138E to 1N144E to 6N131E back to 8N131E. Trade winds converging near the equator well south of both Chuuk and Pohnpei are triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of a line from 6N147E to 4N161E. Trade-wind convergence is causing scattered showers between Kosrae and Majuro within 50 miles of a line from 4N164E to 4N166E to 6N168E and also east of Butaritari Atoll within 75 miles of a line from 2N174E to 5N180.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:01 AM	6:32 PM	Today	1:00 AM	12:35 PM
Sunday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM	Sunday	1:41 AM	1:25 PM
Monday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM	Monday	2:19 AM	2:14 PM
Tuesday	5:59 AM	6:32 PM	Tuesday	2:56 AM	3:04 PM
Wednesday	5:59 AM	6:33 PM	Wednesday	3:32 AM	3:54 PM

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A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ **CAMPUS BULLETIN**
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 12, 2009				
DEPARTURES			ARRIVALS	
Saipan-Rota			Rota-Saipan	
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm 1,7	CO 9598	3:25am 4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam			Guam-Saipan	
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am Daily	CO 9316	2:30am 3:20am 1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am Daily	CO9598	2:30am 4:00am 5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm 1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am 7:50am Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am 11:10am Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm Daily	CO9602	2:00pm 2:50pm Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm Daily	CO9604	5:00pm 5:50pm Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm Daily	CO9606	8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita			Narita-Saipan	
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am Daily	NW 076	10:15am 2:40pm Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm 1:20am+1 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm Daily	NW 100	8:45pm 1:10am+1 Daily
Guam-Narita			Narita-Guam	
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm Daily	NW 74	9:45am 2:20pm Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm Daily	NW 82	10:30am 3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Osaka			Osaka-Saipan	
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am 1,4,6	OZ 120	9:50pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7
Guam-Osaka			Osaka-Guam	
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm Daily	NW 80	10:30am 3:00pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			Nagoya-Saipan	
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am Daily	NW 077	9:00pm 1:20am+1 Daily
Guam-Nagoya			Nagoya-Guam	
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 24	10:00am 2:30pm Daily
Saipan-Incheon			Incheon-Saipan	
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am 1	OZ 605	9:00am 2:20pm Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm 1:00am+1 7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka	OZ 120	7:10pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan			Busan-Saipan	
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am 1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:00pm 2:10am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai			Shanghai-Saipan	
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am 2,6	FM 843	7:15pm 1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam			Guam-Rota	
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm 1,7	CO 9598	2:30am 3:00am 5,6
Guam-Palau			Palau-Guam	
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm 1,7	CO 954	2:30am 5:25am 1,2
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm 3,5	CO 892	2:35am 5:30am 4,6
Palau-Manila			Manila-Palau	
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm 3,5	CO 892	10:10pm 1:50am+1 3,5
Guam-Manila			Manila-Guam	
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm 3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm 5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm Daily	CO 934	11:10pm 4:05am+1 Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			Manila-Nagoya	
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm Daily	NW 72	6:30am 11:05am Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			Hongkong-Incheon	
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm Daily	OZ 724	12:30am 4:50am Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm Daily	OZ 7183	12:45am 5:05am 1,4,6
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm 5,7	OZ 722	1:30pm 5:45pm Daily
Narita-Manila			Manila-Narita	
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm Daily	NW 2	7:45am 12:40pm Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Palin stands against abortion during Ind. speech

EVANSVILLE, Ind. (AP)—Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, speaking at anti-abortion group's dinner, criticized President Barack Obama for supporting abortion rights and challenged the idea that unplanned pregnancies are a nuisance that can be solved by abortion. Palin, the 2008 Republican vice presidential candidate, spoke to an overflow crowd organizers said numbered 3,000 at the Vanderburgh County Right to Life banquet Thursday night. Some in the crowd wore white "Palin 2012" T-shirts. Earlier, GOP National Chairman Michael Steele described her as one of the party's standard bearers, though he said it was too early to judge what her standing would be in three years. Palin said the challenges she faced during her pregnancy with her son Trig, who was born with Down syndrome, gave her an opportunity to live out her anti-abortion beliefs. She said she prayed often during her pregnancy, especially after tests revealed that her son would be born with the condition.

Families of 2 slain at Va. Tech file lawsuits

FAIRFAX, Va. (AP)—The Virginia attorney general's office says two families have sued the state on the second anniversary of the mass killings at Virginia Tech. Relatives of slain students Julie Pryde and Erin Peterson filed the lawsuits in Fairfax County Circuit Court on Thursday, which was the deadline. They were the only families who did not agree to an \$11 million settlement with the state last June. Student Seung-Hui Cho killed 32 people before fatally shooting himself. University officials have been criticized for how they handled the incident. A spokesman for Attorney General Bill Mims confirms the lawsuits were filed but says he can't provide details. Virginia Tech spokesman Larry Hincker says he's aware of the lawsuits. Messages were left for the families.

Mystery donors give over \$45M to 9 universities

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—A mystery is unfolding in the world of college fundraising: During the past few weeks, at least nine universities have received gifts totaling more than \$45 million, and the schools had to promise not to try to find out the giver's identity. One school went so far as to check with the IRS and the Department of Homeland Security just to make sure a \$1.5 million gift didn't come from illegal sources. "In my last 28 years in fundraising ... this is the first time I've dealt with a gift that the institution didn't know who the donor is," said Phillip D. Adams, vice president for university advancement at Norfolk State University, which received \$3.5 million. The gifts ranged from \$8 million at Purdue to \$1.5 million donated to the University of North Carolina at Asheville. The University of Iowa received \$7 million; the University of Southern Mississippi, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and the University of Maryland University College got \$6 million each; the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs was given \$5.5 million; and Penn State-Harrisburg received \$3 million.

Police: 3 dead in California hospital shooting

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP)—A hospital worker shot and killed two employees and then killed himself at a medical center Thursday, sending panicked people fleeing, police and witnesses said.

The gunman was identified as Mario Ramirez, 50, of Alhambra, who died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, police said. The victims were Hugo Bustamante, 46, of Cypress, who died at the scene, and Kelly Hales, 56, of Redondo Beach, who was taken to the hospital's emergency room in critical condition and died several hours later.

Police Chief Anthony Batts said the gunfire erupted just before noon at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. He said the motive remained under investigation but noted the violence came amid a flurry of recent shootings in the country.

"This is a trend of active shooters that you have seen nationwide," Batts said at a news conference. "This is becoming a national trend, probably because of the tension that's going on in our society today."

Hospital spokeswoman Stacie Crompton-Hime said all three men worked in an outpatient pharmacy where Bustamante was the manager and Hales was the executive director. Asked if the shooting stemmed from a dispute or possible layoffs at the hospital, Crompton-Hime said there were layoffs last month but no other reductions were planned.

At Ramirez's home in Alhambra, his wife, Lydia, told her two sons the news



The body of Mario Ramirez of Alhambra, lies on the parking lot grounds as police investigate a shooting at Long Beach Memorial Hospital Thursday April 16, 2009 in Long Beach, Calif.

about their father late Thursday, said her sister, Eva Reyes, who had come to comfort her. She declined to give more details about Ramirez or the family.

Later, Ramirez's oldest son, Aaron, 14, sat on the front steps in the dark and hid his tears in the hood of a green sweatshirt.

He asked a TV cameraman what happened to his dad. The teen said his mother told him that his father had died, but he didn't know the details.

The boy said he came outside because he couldn't stand to see his mother and younger brother crying.

Neighbor Gina Marquez, 41, de-

scribed Ramirez as a family man who was quiet and polite. He would often go jogging with his wife, she said.

"You never heard a peep from that house. It's unreal," Marquez said. "I can't imagine what state of mind he would have been in to do something like that."

Obama: No charges for harsh CIA interrogation

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama absolved CIA officers from prosecution for harsh, painful interrogation of terror suspects Thursday, even as his administration released Bush-era memos graphically detailing—and authorizing—such grim tactics as slamming detainees against walls, waterboarding them and keeping them naked and cold for long periods.

Human rights groups and many Obama officials have condemned such methods as torture. Bush officials have vigorously disagreed.

In releasing the documents, the most comprehensive accounting yet of interrogation methods that were among

the Bush administrations most closely guarded secrets, Obama said he wanted to move beyond "a dark and painful chapter in our history."

Past and present CIA officials had unsuccessfully pressed for more parts of the four legal memos to be kept secret, and some critics argued the release would make the United States less safe.

Michael Hayden, who led the CIA under George W. Bush, said CIA officers will now be more timid and allies will be more reluctant to share sensitive intelligence.

"If you want an intelligence service to work for you, they always

work on the edge. That's just where they work," Hayden said. Now, he argued, foreign partners will be less likely to cooperate with the CIA because the release shows they "can't keep anything secret."

On the other side, human rights advocates argued that Obama should not have assured the CIA that officers who conducted interrogations would not be prosecuted if they used methods authorized by Bush lawyers in the memos.

Obama disagreed, saying in a statement, "Nothing will be gained by spending our time and energy laying blame for the past."

Captain held by pirates heading home to Vermont

UNDERHILL, Vt. (AP)—Five days after being rescued from the clutches of Somali pirates, cargo ship captain Richard Phillips is headed home. And the "Welcome Home" balloons and signs are already up.

The 53-year-old sea captain, who was held hostage for five days after the aborted hijacking of his ship, was expected to fly to Vermont in a chartered airplane, arriving Friday afternoon at Burlington International Airport before being taken to Underhill.

"He's our hero," said resident David Villeneuve, who put up signs in his yard to welcome Phillips. "He's the best thing to happen to the U.S. in a while."

The crew members of Phillips' ship, the Maersk Alabama, flew into Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington, D.C., early Thursday.

Phillips, who was originally supposed to fly with them, was delayed when the USS *Bainbridge*, which was carrying him after his rescue by Navy SEALs, diverted to help another pirated ship. He left Kenya on an executive jet, the first step of the long-awaited journey home.

George Bacigalupo, general manager of Atlantic Aviation, which handles corporate and private aircraft flying into Burlington International Airport, said a plane carrying Phillips was expected about 4:30 p.m. Friday.

It wasn't immediately disclosed what kind of homecoming Phillips' family and friends had in store once he returns to the small rural community at the foot of Mount Mansfield. There was no immediate plan for a parade or public celebration.

"We're respecting the family's

wishes and waiting to see what they'd like to do," said Kari Papelbon, the town's zoning administrator.

But many were giddy with anticipation Thursday.

At Poker Hill Arts, an after-school art program for elementary school students, owner Chris Gluck and her charges put the finishing touches on a banner before fastening it to the wooden porch of the Underhill Country Store.

The 18-foot-long banner, made of tar paper, added "Captain Phillips" beneath one erected Monday that said "Welcome Home." Both left plenty of room inside the white block letters for people to write their greetings with pens tied to them.

"Welcome Home Capt. Phillips (Biggest Celebrity in Underhill)," read one scribbled note.

Thousands mourn California girl, 8, found in suitcase

TRACY, Calif. (AP)—Several thousand people gathered Thursday to remember an 8-year-old girl who most only knew as a smiling face on flyers but who many felt close to after the massive search for her body.

Family members and community leaders recalled Sandra Cantu as an exuberant, loving girl who enjoyed skipping down the city's streets. Her remains were found last week in a suitcase pulled from an irrigation pond near her home.

"This little girl, Sandra, in two weeks became much more than a little girl who lived down the street in a town in California," Tracy police Chief Janet Thiessen said. "Sandra Cantu became our little girl, a child whose spirits touched us as we searched for her and prayed for her safe return."

An overflow crowd of more than 600 people watched the ceremony on a screen in the high school's cafeteria and listened to it through speakers on the football field. Many in attendance wore T-shirts with the little girl's face.

Sandra's relatives, including her mother, father and sisters, lined the front row of the school gymnasium, holding each other and crying at times.

Images of Sandra graduating from preschool, blowing out birthday candles and opening Christmas presents played on two screens at the auditorium.

Asia

Gunmen attack Thai 'yellow shirt' protest leader

BANGKOK (AP)—The founder of Thailand's "yellow shirt" protest movement that shut down Bangkok airports last year was shot and wounded in an assassination attempt Friday, just days after troops cracked down on rioting protesters from the rival, anti-government "red shirt" group.

The government quickly moved to tighten security around Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, who said a state of emergency that was imposed Sunday in Bangkok would remain in place. Vehicles carrying Abhisit were attacked twice by red-shirted protesters in the

run-up to this week's riots.

Sondhi Limthongkul, a media tycoon and supporter of the current government who founded the People's Alliance for Democracy protest movement to oppose previous governments, was in stable condition after surgery that removed a bullet from his skull, said Vajira Hospital director Chaiwan Charoenchoktaewee.

Sondhi's alliance immediately labeled the attack politically motivated, a claim that police said was under investigation. The red-shirt protesters have expressed anger that several of their leaders were arrested over

the past week, while Sondhi and his allies were never prosecuted over last year's airport seizures.

The pre-dawn attack came just hours before the government met for a special Cabinet meeting that had been called to discuss the recent violence and measures to boost Thailand's beleaguered economy, a matter that has been upstaged by political turmoil.

Abhisit told reporters the Cabinet had decided "not to revoke the emergency decree," which was imposed Sunday to control rioting in the capital. "We have to make sure peace and order truly returns."

Afghan quakes kill at least 19, destroy homes

KABUL (AP)—Two earthquakes shook eastern Afghanistan early Friday, killing at least 19 people and destroying dozens of homes, officials said.

The quakes destroyed an estimated 100 houses in two villages in Nangarhar province, said governor's spokesman Ahmad Zia Abdulzai. The provincial police chief, Ghafor Khan, said at least 19 people were killed and 20 injured.

One villager said the death toll was considerably higher. Officials were traveling to the site.

The U.S. Geological Survey said Nangarhar province was hit by two earthquakes—a 5.5 magnitude quake at about 2 a.m., and a 5.1 magnitude aftershock two hours later.

China calls for NKorea, US to improve relations

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—China called Friday for better relations and dialogue between North Korea and the U.S. amid an escalating standoff over the North's rocket launch and its expulsion of U.N. nuclear inspectors.

Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said Beijing will work to maintain the six-nation nuclear disarmament talks that North Korea said it would boycott after the U.N. condemned its launch, according to an interview published Friday in Japan's Nihon Keizai newspaper. North Korea says it launched a satellite but others have said it was actually testing ballistic missile technology.

China—which is North Korea's only major ally but backed the U.N. rebuke—

"hopes for the development of and improvement in relations between the United States and North Korea," Yang said in the interview.

He said China was in touch with other members of the six-party negotiations and hinted that Beijing would support bilateral talks between the United States and North Korea, saying "whether bilateral or multilateral, they mutually promote" relations.

In Seoul, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak expressed hope that "the path to peace and reconciliation will open widely" in North Korea, according to the text of a speech on Friday to mark the anniversary of a nationwide pro-democracy student uprising.

town, outside Suizhou. Police later discovered the bodies of three men and three women after searching Xiong's junkyard. He was arrested in January. He said he committed the murders because he "was anguished deeply in the heart," according to local media, Xinhua said. He also had financial difficulties, Xinhua said.

Indonesia clears Time of defaming Suharto

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia's top court cleared *Time* magazine of defaming ex-dictator Suharto by alleging in a cover story that his family amassed a fortune during his rule. It said Thursday the publication did not have to pay \$106 million in damages. The ruling, which marks the end of the appeals process, was hailed as a victory for press freedom. "We have been struggling to find justice for a decade now," said Todung Mulya Lubis, the magazine's lawyer, adding he hoped the decision would give journalists the courage to do their jobs. "It has been a long road." *Time* ran a cover story in its Asian edition in May 1999 saying Suharto's family had pocketed billions of dollars during his 32-year reign—the bulk of it from oil and mining, forestry, property, banking and petrochemicals—and that they'd stashed much of the money overseas. Lubis said the article was based on four months' reporting in 11 countries. Suharto, who died last year at age 87, initially filed lawsuits against the magazine with the Central District Jakarta Court and later the Jakarta High Court, both of which ruled in *Time*'s favor.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Radical Pakistani cleric released on bail

ISLAMABAD (AP)—A pro-Taliban cleric detained since a bloody assault in 2007 on his radical Red Mosque in the Pakistani capital has been released on bail and is vowing to lead a peaceful campaign for Islamic law in the country. Hundreds of supporters greeted Maulana Abdul Aziz as he was freed late Thursday from house arrest. The cleric said he intended to lead prayers Friday at the mosque in Islamabad. "God willing, the day is not far away when Islam will be enforced in the whole of Pakistan," Aziz said. "Our struggle has always been peaceful, and we will continue this struggle for the enforcement of Islamic laws in the country." The Red Mosque siege was a turning point in Pakistan's slide into religious extremism and violence.

Jilted man who killed 8 in China executed

BEIJING (AP)—A man who murdered eight people including a widow who jilted him and her 2-year-old grandson has been executed, China's official Xinhua News Agency said Friday. Xiong Zhenlin, a junk collector, was executed Thursday in the central city of Suizhou in Hubei province, after the death sentence was approved by the Supreme People's Court, Xinhua said. Xiong, who was divorced in September, hoped to remarry but was refused by both his ex-wife and the 43-year-old widow Zhu Deqing. He then killed Zhu and the boy at their home in Luoyang

World

US, Cuban presidents open the door for new relations



Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, right, and Cuban President Raul Castro, left, wave during the official photo of the ALBA Summit in Cumana, Venezuela, Thursday, April 16, 2009.

MEXICO CITY (AP)—The new presidents of the United States and Cuba, in a surprisingly direct exchange, appeared to open the door Thursday for negotiations toward a new relationship between the two coun-

tries divided by 90 miles of water and 50 years of cold war.

After removing some of the restrictions that lock Americans and their money out of Cuba in what he called a show of good faith, Barack Obama said Thurs-

day that it was up to Havana to take the next step.

Within hours, Raul Castro replied from a summit in Venezuela: "We have sent word to the U.S. government in private and in public that we are willing to discuss everything—human rights, freedom of the press, political prisoners, everything."

That was the boldest and most conciliatory language Castro or his brother Fidel—who handed him the presidency a year ago after falling ill—have used with any U.S. administration since that of Dwight D. Eisenhower in early 1961, when the nations broke off relations. It appeared to be a transcendent development, the best opportunity for talks in a half-century.

Raul Castro has previously said he would be willing to discuss all issues with Obama. But Cuban officials have historically bristled at the suggestion that they might discuss human rights or political prisoners with the Americans, saying such matters are none of the Yankees' business.

Somali leader: Give us resources to pursue pirates

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—The United States pressed Somalia on Thursday to root out the pirates menacing the seas off the Horn of Africa, and its prime minister said he could go after them if other nations give him the resources he needs.

That could open the way for more missions to hunt down the pirates inside the lawless country—actions that have been authorized by the United Nations but rarely carried out.

Prime Minister Omar Ab-

dirashid Ali Sharmarke told The Associated Press that his piracy-fighting plan will be ready next week in time for an international conference on Somalia in Brussels.

The international community is grappling with how to confront escalating attacks off the Horn of Africa by larger, bolder and better-armed pirate gangs who menace one of the world's busiest sea routes—especially after the dramatic rescue of American captain Richard Phillips, who was

held for five days by pirates.

Phillips, of the U.S.-flagged Maersk Alabama cargo ship, reached port Thursday in Mombasa, Kenya, aboard the USS Bainbridge, hours after his crew held a joyous reunion with their families at Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

In Nairobi, Sharmarke and the president of the semiautonomous Puntland region met with U.S. diplomats including the ambassador to Kenya, which borders Somalia.

WORLD BRIEFS

Tent school opens for youngest Italy quake victims

POGGIO PICENZE, Italy (AP)—Some of the youngest victims of central Italy's earthquake got a taste of normalcy Thursday when the school bell rang, summoning them to makeshift classrooms set up among the tents they now call home. Children carrying knapsacks and notebooks returned to school in three tent classrooms with rows of desks and a blackboard up front in the camp housing most of the inhabitants of the tiny village of Poggio Picenze. The mayor of the stricken hamlet, a few miles (kilometers) from the hard-hit city of L'Aquila, rang a small bell as school reopened for the first time since the April 6 temblor. The children were kept away from the media, but Sky TG24 television interviewed one fourth-grader who said she was thrilled to go back since she had missed school. "I'm happy," said the youngster, who wasn't identified. "I missed my friends and teachers."

Official: Palestinian killed in West Bank violence

JERUSALEM (AP)—A Palestinian wielding a knife was shot and killed by Jewish settlers early Friday in what appeared to be a foiled attack in a West Bank settlement, Israeli rescue services said. The attack, which follows the killing of a 13-year-old at another Jewish settlement early this month, could increase tensions between the Palestinians and Israel's new hard-line government. The Pal-

estinian entered the settlement of Beit Hagai and tried to stab several residents before he was shot by settlers, the Zaka rescue service said. One of the settlers told Army Radio that he and a friend had confronted the Palestinian, who appeared to be between 18 and 20. When approached, the man pulled out a knife, said the settler, who identified himself only as Uziel.

Conservationists fear for Zimbabwe rhino

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Conservationists raised the alarm Thursday for Zimbabwe's rare rhinos after a sharp increase in poaching because of a breakdown of law enforcement in this troubled southern African country. Organized criminal gangs kill rhinos to sell the valuable horn that is used as a traditional medicine in Asia and carved for ceremonial dagger handles in the Middle East, Raoul du Toit, head of southern Zimbabwe's Lowveld Rhino Trust, said in a telephone conference call with reporters. Zimbabwe's rhino population declined from about 830 in 2007 to 740 at the end of 2008 despite an excellent birth rate in monitored herds, London-based Save the Rhino executive director Cathy Dean said during the conference call. Save the Rhino said at least 90 rhino were poached in 2008, twice the toll of the previous year, and conservation groups had counted 18 killed so far in 2009. It called for concerted action by the Zimbabwean government and international agencies.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, April 18, 2009

140 Filipino workers to upgrade skills in 4 courses

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

At least 140 Filipino workers will benefit from four skills upgrading and reintegration courses that the Philippine Overseas Labor Office will start to offer on May 16 and 17. Enrollment in these courses—offered free of charge to students—improves workers' competitiveness in the workplace.

The courses also provide over-

seas Filipino workers with the skills they need to pursue livelihood projects or businesses once they return to the Philippines.

As of yesterday, all the slots available for these courses have already been filled up, and a lot more are on the waiting list.

Philippine labor attaché Joann Lourdes Lavilla said on May 1, POLO staff will start calling the workers who are on the list of those accepted to attend the courses in basic Nihonggo, basic sewing, basic computer op-

eration 2, and commercial cooking/culinary arts.

"We ask the workers to avail of the free classes available to them. Workers should confirm their participation right away. If they cannot attend the classes, then we would be able to accommodate the other students who are also applying for these slots," Lavilla told *Saipan Tribune*.

All the classes will be held at the Filipino Workers Resource Center on the first floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (former-

ly Nauru Building) in Susupe.

The commercial cooking/culinary arts, which will be conducted by volunteer teacher Hermie Coronejo, will start on May 16, Saturday, from 2pm to 5pm. Lavilla said the class can accommodate 50 students.

"The class is already full but there are still pending applications," Lavilla added.

Volunteer teacher Cris Hilario will conduct the basic computer operation 2 class starting on May 17, Sunday, from 9am to

noon. The class will accommodate 35 students, but all the slots have already been filled up.

"There are a lot of students who want to take the classes, especially basic computer operation and basic Nihonggo," Lavilla said.

The basic sewing class, to be conducted by volunteer teacher Teresa de Jesus, will start on May 17, Sunday, from 2pm to 5pm. All the 25 slots for the class have been filled up.

On the same day, from

2:30pm to 5:30pm, volunteer teacher Jun Rodriguez Jr. will start conducting a basic Nihonggo class for 50 students. The slots are all taken, and a lot more are on the waiting list.

Thousands of Filipino workers in the CNMI have benefited from the skills upgrading courses offered by POLO on a periodic basis, with the help of volunteer teachers. For more information about the courses, call the POLO staff at 235 3411 or 235 6992.

More Filipinos looking for jobs abroad

MANILA, Philippines—The number of Filipinos leaving the Philippines daily to seek work abroad could swell from about 3,000 now, foreign affairs officials said on Wednesday after the agency was swamped with passport applications.

Filipinos are undaunted by widespread job losses around the globe owing to the sharp economic downturn, and opting to leave their families behind to seek jobs overseas with unemployment in the Philippines on the rise.

"Most of the applicants intend to look for work abroad," said a foreign affairs official who asked for anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Applications for passports have jumped by two-thirds to a new peak of more than 10,000 daily since last month from about 6,000 early this year, Eduardo Malaya, spokesman of the Department of Foreign Affairs, told reporters.

The previous peak was 8,000 applicants in one day last year.

Hundreds of Filipinos complained of delays in the issuance of passports due to computer glitches on Wednesday.

"This is a temporary delay caused by the sudden increase in passport applications," Malaya said, adding the onset of summer vacation in the Philippines was one reason for the rise in applicants.

About a tenth of the Philippines' 90 million people work abroad, with their remittances forming the backbone of domestic consumption.

An average of 3,000 Filipinos leave the country every day to seek work as domestic helpers, construction workers, medical and IT professionals and seafarers, sending home \$16.4 billion in 2008, according to data from the Labor department. (*Reuters*)



SPRING TRAINING

Manny Pacquiao, left, of the Philippines, and trainer Freddie Roach talk in the ring during a workout, with writers and photographers in attendance, for his upcoming boxing match against Ricky Hatton, in Los Angeles on Wednesday, April 15, 2009. Manny Pacquiao's sparring partners are feeling the sting of his newfound punching prowess. Raymond Serrano, 19, who totes an unblemished 7-0 record with five knockouts, told Foxsports.com that he felt Pacquiao's new strength in his punches. The other fighters hired by Roach to spar with Pacquiao were Gary Young, Mike Alvarado, David Rodela and Urbano Antillon. Pacquiao, who is about 90 to 95 percent ready, according to Roach, previously sparred another 10 rounds with Antillon, Rodela and Serrano. Elated by the progress of Pacquiao's training, Roach insisted that his prized ward will knock out Hatton in the early rounds.

LABOR FRONT

Request for renewal

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Q: How many days prior to the termination of an employment contract should an employer submit a request for renewal to the Department of Labor?

A: A request for renewal should be submitted no earlier than 45 days prior to the termination date of the Labor-approved employment contract.

According to the Regulations of Labor's Reform Law, late fees may be imposed if a renewal request is submitted after the contract termination date. Renewal requests filed more than 60 days after the contract termination date will be denied. A denial, however, may be appealed to Labor's Administrative Hearing Office.

*** **

Q: What documents are needed to be attached to a re-

quest for renewal?

A: The regulations state that a request for renewal should be accompanied by copies of an approved employment contract, an approved health insurance contract, and an approved security contract covering the foreign national worker to be renewed. An employer may submit a new employment contract with new terms as necessary.

A request for renewal should also be accompanied by a certification by the employer and the employee that there are, as of the date of the application, no disputes pending between

them, no complaints outstanding, and no grievances undressed.

*** **

Q: What will happen to a request for renewal if the employer has outstanding obligations?

A: The regulations state that a renewal may not be granted if the employer has any outstanding payments more than 60 days in arrears with respect to any approved health insurance contract, any approved security contract, or any judgment in a Labor proceeding, except those on appeal.

RP to repatriate OFW victims of Italy quake

By KRISTINE L. ALAVE
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine government will repatriate some Filipinos who were affected by the earthquake in Italy early this month, according to Overseas Workers Welfare Administration chief Carmelita Dimzon.

Dimzon, who is scheduled to go to Rome on Friday, said at least 100 Filipinos have been left homeless by the 6.3 magnitude earthquake that rocked central Italy.

She said the welfare officer in the Philippine embassy in Rome was gathering information on Filipinos who want to return to their country.

Server overload delays passport releases

MANILA, Philippines—Due to "minor technical difficulties," there will be a two- to three-day delay in the processing and release of passports, but the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said operations will normalize Monday, April 20.

DFA spokesman Eduardo Malaya said the problem—"an overload in one of the servers"—affects only 200 to 300 of the 10,000 passports that the department's Office of Consular Affairs handle daily.

"There is no need to worry for the bulk of our passport applicants," he said.

Earlier, a number of pass-

port applicants complained of the delay in the release of their passports. The months of April and May usually see a surge of passport applicants.

Malaya thus advised applicants who urgently need to travel overseas this week to visit the Office of Passport director Donna Gatmaitan. He said the release of their passports will be given priority.

"OCA is addressing this minor technical difficulty, and assures the general public that by Monday, April 20, the processing and releasing of passports will be at normal levels," he said. (*INQUIRER.net*)

Disclaimer: Readers should conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional legal advice. Saipan Tribune will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from this section. Submit questions on labor issues to Saipan Tribune via e-mail at editor@saipantribune.com, or by calling 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747 and leaving a message at Ext. 133 or 135. You may also submit questions in person by writing it down and dropping it off at the Saipan Tribune's office on the second floor of the JP Center on Beach Road, Garapan.

Failon's wife negative for gunpowder residue

By ABIGAIL KWOK
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—The wife of television news anchor Ted Failon has tested negative for gunpowder residue, a police official said.

But Superintendent Franklin Mabanag, chief of the Quezon City Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, said that they would still have to further analyze the results on Trinidad Artech-Etong, who died Thursday following complications from a gunshot wound on the head.

This was also confirmed by Senior Superintendent Elmo San Diego, officer-in charge of the Quezon City Police District, in a press conference at Camp Karinal police headquarters Friday.

But Superintendent Filemon Porciuncula Jr., chief of the QCPD Crime Lab, stressed that the negative results were inconclusive as of posting time because of the "medical intervention" done on Failon's wife when she was admitted to the New Era General Hospital on Wednesday, the same day she was found inside the bathroom of the Failons' house in Quezon City.

"Etong stayed in the hospital for 48 hours [before we conducted the autopsy] and medical interventions were done such as the cleaning of the wound. The medical intervention could have reacted to the gunpowder residue," Porciuncula added.

With this, San Diego said police were not yet ruling out suicide in the death of Etong, pending the official results of the Scene of the Crime Operatives.

"We cannot rule out suicide. Hindi pa tapos ang investigation at bibigyan natin ng sagot yung mga malabo pa [The investigation isn't over. We will answer the questions that are unclear]," San Diego said.

He added that police would also be looking at the circumstances surrounding the tampering of the crime scene.

"Deliberate ba ang pag-alter sa crime scene [Were the alterations made on the crime scene deliberate]?" San Diego said, adding that police could also be looking at

parricide in Etong's death.

Mabanag, however, said that all the statements issued by Failon and his four house helpers were consistent in that

Failon did not order them to clean the crime scene.

At this time, SOCO were able to conduct tests to determine the trajectory of the bullet. SOCO personnel were also able to conduct lumi-

no-testing, which revealed that there were traces of blood in the bathroom where Etong was found, near the stairs, and inside the master's bedroom.

Porciuncula said that based on Failon's account, the blood stains near the stairs were a result of Failon transporting Etong from the bathroom to their car.

The blood stains inside the bedroom allegedly came from Failon who changed his clothes after the incident.

Porciuncula said that Failon's shirt, now with police, would also be tested for gunpowder residue.

Mabanag also pointed out

that apart from cleaning the crime scene, investigators also discovered that the .380 caliber

pistol used by Etong was "bun-gled with fingerprints."

Mabanag said Failon's house

helper, Pacifico Apacible, was the first one to touch the gun, followed by Failon himself.

Failon sister-in-law, maid freed without bail

MANILA, Philippines—The sister of Ted Failon's wife, and one of the broadcaster's house helpers, Carlota Morbos, have been ordered released by the Quezon City prosecutor without paying bail.

"Respondents Pamela Artech and Carlota Morbos are ordered immediately released without

need of posting bail unless to be detained further for other lawful cause considering there is yet no sufficient evidence to support probable cause... for the crime charge obstruction of justice," assistant city prosecutor Mary Jean Pamitan said.

"The complaint against them is subject to further investigation," she said. (*INQUIRER.net*)

Cops in Failon kin's arrest relieved

MANILA, Philippines—National Capital Region police office director Chief Superintendent Roberto Rosales has ordered the immediate relief of policemen who allegedly used excessive force in arresting the relatives of news anchor Ted Failon at the New Era General Hospital Thursday night.

In a press conference at the Camp Crame police headquarters Friday, Rosales said he ordered Senior Superintendent Elmo San Diego, Quezon City police district (QCPD) officer-in-charge, to immediately investigate the incident.

At the same time, Rosales ordered that all policemen involved in the investigation into the shooting of Failon's wife, Trinidad Artech-Etong, be removed.

Etong expired in the hospital 8:50 p.m. Thursday.

In a separate press conference, San Diego said it would investigate allegations that some of its men used "excessive force" when they arrested family members of Failon.

But San Diego also appealed to the public to

let the police do its job.

"We will never tolerate the use of excessive force. This will be thoroughly investigated," he said.

But San Diego quickly added, "But don't tell us how to do our jobs."

Trinidad Artech-Etong's siblings, Pamela and Maximo, were arrested by police Thursday night.

San Diego also denied that they failed to read the Miranda Rights, which was supposed to be a mandatory process when arresting a suspect.

"Hindi pwedeng mangyari yun dahil bibliya namin yun [That cannot happen because that is our Bible]," he said.

Nevertheless, San Diego said he would be investigating his own men.

"Hindi porket high profile si Failon at critical siya sa QCPD...hindi totoong gumaganti kami kay Failon [Not because Failon is high profile and he has been critical of the QCPD, it is not true that we are taking our revenge on Failon]" he added. (*INQUIRER.net*)

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

NPA rebel killed in Masbate clash

SORSOGON CITY—An unidentified communist rebel was killed in an encounter between elements of the 9th Infantry Battalion and around 30 New People's Army rebels in Masbate, an Army official Friday. A 30-minute firefight ensued when government troopers on patrol the rebels in at 10:15 a.m. Thursday in Barangay (village) Manloto, Esperanza, at 10:15 a.m. on Thursday, said Captain Razaleigh Bansawan, civil-military operations officer of the 901st Infantry Brigade. The Army recovered an M-16 rifle after the encounter, added Bansawan. (*INQUIRER.net*)

3 get life for selling drugs

MANILA, Philippines—Three men were sentenced to life imprisonment by a local court Friday for selling illegal drugs. In separate cases, the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 2 found Peter Linda, Christian "Bunso" Ramac and Ronaldo "Bong" Angeles guilty of violating Section 5 Article 2 of Republic Act No. 9165. The three were ordered to pay a fine of P500,000 each. Ramac was also convicted of possession of illegal drugs in violation of Section 11 Article 2 of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act. He was sentenced to 17 years in prison and fined an additional P300,000. According to court records, Linda was arrested in Malate, Manila, by a police poseur-buyer on Feb. 22, 2008, while brothers-in-law Ramac and Angeles were arrested in a buy-bust opera-

tion in Quiapo on Oct. 9, 2007. (*INQUIRER.net*)

De Venecia's wife bares 2010 bid

MANILA, Philippines—Gina de Venecia is shedding her former role of supportive wife of former Speaker Jose de Venecia and venturing to make her own mark in the country's politics. "Manay Gina," as she is known to friends, said she would seek a seat either in the House of Representatives or the Senate in the May 2010

election. "I will run either for Congress or the Senate. I'm still studying my options where I can serve more," she told *INQUIRER.net* in an interview after attending the launching of the left-wing coalition, Makabayan, at the University of the Philippines Thursday. De Venecia said she would make the formal announcement in June, but added she was more inclined to join the senatorial race because of the clamor, especially from women's groups. (*INQUIRER.net*)

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Somali pirates hold 120 Filipino seamen—DFA

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The number of Filipino seamen now in captivity by Somali pirates has swelled to 120, the Department of Foreign Affairs said on Thursday.

This was the latest number following the hijacking of a Greek-owned bulk carrier with 22 Filipino seafarers on board in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia.

DFA Spokesperson Ed Malaya told reporters that the MV Irene E.M. was hijacked by pirates last April 14.

Malaya said the local manning agency of the vessel has assured the DFA that the Filipino seafarers were unharmed and that the principal was exerting all efforts for the early release of the vessel and its crew.

A total of eight vessels, with 120 Filipino seafarers, are currently in the hands of Somali pirates.

“The Philippine Government continues to coordinate closely with concerned foreign authorities and the local manning agencies of the hijacked vessels to secure the early and safe release of the Filipino seafarers,” Malaya said.

The Philippines is the world’s leading supplier of merchant mariners, with over 350,000 sailors manning oil tankers, luxury liners and passenger vessels worldwide.

Online reports said the 35,000-ton merchant ship is Greek-owned and flagged in Saint-Vincent and the Grenadines.

Tuesday’s hijacking was the ninth that occurred in the Gulf

of Aden and the Indian Ocean since the start of the month. MV Irene was the seventh vessel with predominantly Filipino crew members hijacked since Nov. 10, 2008.

Malacañang said that the Philippine government was poised to recommend a ban on the deployment of Filipino seamen in waters off Somalia.

But the Department of Foreign Affairs said banning Filipino seamen from certain risky regions would be extremely difficult due to the sailors’ rapid mobility.

Moreover, the government could not impose restrictions on the movement of the seafarers as this would violate their contracts with their manning agencies.

The DFA has always maintained that it does not directly

talk with kidnappers as the government keeps a ‘no-ransom policy’ in these situations.

Instead, the DFA contacts the ship owners and the seafarers’ manning agency to facilitate the safe release of the Filipinos.

Despite reports of ransom money being exchanged for the release of the crew and the vessel, the DFA maintains that it has no knowledge of this.

Other ships with Filipino crew being held by pirates include: MT Stolt Strength - hijacked on Nov. 11, 2008 with 23 Filipinos; MV Saldanha - Feb. 22, 2009 with 19 Filipinos; MV Titan - March 19, 2009 with 17 Filipinos; Napayia - March 25, 2009 with 18 Filipinos; WinFar 161 - hijacked last April 6 with 17 Filipinos; and Malaspina Castle - hijacked last April 6 with 4 Filipinos.

Wives fear loss of RP seamen held by pirates

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Ruel de Guzman seemed destined for a life at sea.

For 20 years, the sea was good as De Guzman married, then started a family. He had risen to second mate on the MT Stolt Strength, a chemical tanker, sending home nearly \$2,000 a month to support his wife Vilma, their four children and his 81-year-old mother.

“In the province, people flaunt their wealth, and so he wanted a nice house, too,” Vilma said. “He became a seaman to help his family.”

Then last November, Somali pirates swarmed aboard as the tanker sailed through the Gulf of Aden while hauling a cargo of phosphoric acid destined for Japan. Since then, the 46-year-old De Guzman and 22 other Filipinos have languished for months with scant rations, little water and constant threats as negotiations for their release dragged on.

For them, a military rescue is unlikely because the Stolt Strength is anchored in a pirate stronghold. Their only hope is that a ransom will eventually be paid.

While sailors from richer countries get freed relatively quickly in exchange for multi-million-dollar ransoms, those from poorer countries like the Philippines and Indonesia often wait for months, because the companies they work for can’t afford to make a big payoff.

‘Take care of mommy’

Vilma was at the shipping company with other hostages’ wives when her husband called last



Catherine Boretta, right, and Doris Deseo, wives of Filipino seamen who are still being held hostage by Somali pirates for about five months now, seek help from a private labor assistance group in suburban Manila, Philippines, on Thursday April 16, 2009.

Friday for only the second time since the pirate takeover and talked with their three daughters, ages 15, 10 and 7, and their 9-year-old son.

“He told them, ‘Take care of mommy, take care of your siblings, love each other,’” Vilma told The Associated Press. “He was saying goodbye to his kids just in case he does not come out of this ordeal alive.”

“I know when you are a seaman, it’s really a high risk ... We continue to receive his salary. He gets a big salary, but what will we do ... if we lose my husband?”

Relatives of the hostages say that during the five months their loved ones have been held, the pirates have lowered their ransom demand from \$5 million to \$2.2 million. But there’s no sign any payoff will come.

A spokesperson for the ship’s London-based charter

company, Stolt-Nielsen, said arguments between different factions of pirates holding the vessel has hampered efforts to free it.

And while the manpower companies that contract the seamen have to pay double-pay for hazardous duty in pirate zones and carry insurance for payouts to their families in case of injury or death, it’s unclear whether that is enough for a multimillion-dollar ransom, said Nelson Ramirez, president of the United Filipino Seafarers union.

Wedding ring taken

Anything of value—including clothing, her husband’s wedding ring and all the money he had saved to send home—were grabbed by the pirates, Vilma said.

“My husband holds the medicines and takes care of

the other crew because he has some medical training. He said, ‘Many of us are getting sick.’”

Among the ailing is 36-year-old Rodell Boretta who was shot in the leg by a stray bullet during an argument between two of the pirates, according to his wife, Catherine.

She and other relatives described mock executions and other psychological abuse when ransom negotiations break down.

Mentally tortured

The wife of the ship’s 62-year-old captain, Abelardo Pacheco, said that during the brief phone conversations she has been allowed with her husband, she hears pirate voices in the background, dictating what to say.

“The crew has been there for a long time now and are mentally tortured,” Asuncion Pacheco said.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

Braving the crisis to start a business

Editor’s Note: This is part of Take Charge of Your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: I have always wanted to start my own business. I love fashion, and I have set my sights on opening a small boutique in Greenhills. Although I am currently working, I plan to resign by August so I can concentrate on my business and prepare for the holiday shopping season. But with the current economic crisis, I am having second thoughts. Is this a good time to start a business? What if things don’t go well? — Myra

Answer: A lot of people are faced with the same dilemma, Myra: to start a business now or not? Times are indeed hard, and this is true whether one is aiming to start a business in the Philippines, in Japan, the United States or anywhere else in the world. The global financial crisis has affected everyone, although in different degrees.

But although times are hard, it doesn’t mean that we all should hide under the bed. Throughout history, there have always been periods when economies slow down but they always recover after some time. As to when recoveries happen, the length of time vary greatly.

It’s true the current times call for more prudence in setting up a business, and for those who already have an existing business, in expanding operations. Credit may be tighter, meaning, banks and financial institutions may be stricter in granting loans to entrepreneur applicants. So before deciding to open a business or expand one, make sure you have enough capital to finance much of the business yourself as possible.

The following are some more tips on how you can tread this new avenue safely and surely:

1. Have a solid business plan. You may already have an idea of the kind of merchandise you want to sell in your store, but there are a lot of other things to consider. Who is your target market? What does he/she like? How can you entice him/her to go inside your store and make a purchase? Among other things, also consider your pricing strategy—it should be at the right range for your target market so that you won’t push him/her away being too expensive or too cheap. Your business plan should also detail how much you need to sell so you can break even. It should plot an expected timetable for return on investment (ROI).

2. Have your financial system in order from the get-go. Make sure that your business registration with the proper government agencies (BIR, DTI, SEC, SSS) are taken care of and you have official receipts and books. Hire an accountant or bookkeeper to set up your financial recording system. Then choose a bank you can build a long relationship with. Ideally, your bank should be near your place of business and should allow access to your account online and on mobile phone. Also, it would be good if you can enroll your bills in your account so you won’t have to queue up physically at the bank to pay utility bills – just pay for these online or over the phone. By establishing a good relationship with your bank, you will have built up trust by the time you are ready to take out a loan and avail of other bank services such as ATM payroll services and the like.

3. Avail of insurance. Get enough insurance coverage so you can get back the cost of your inventory should a fire happen. Choose a reputable insurance company that has a solid track record for decades. Do your research first and find out all you can about the insurance company before signing the deal.

4. Find other revenue streams. You may want to operate mainly from your Greenhills outlet, but consider joining bazaars in other places during the Christmas season. The overhead is minimal. You may just need additional manpower for the season.

5. Have a safety net. Going into business entails assuming some risk. Make sure you have your own savings to fall back on should you find yourself having cash flow problems. Make this your emergency fund which should be enough to cover three to six months’ worth of your personal expenses. Dip into this fund only when you absolutely need to do so.

6. Lastly, hook up with other entrepreneurs. There are business organizations for young entrepreneurs out there, such as Network for Enterprising Women, among others. Join groups like this to network and to learn from other successful entrepreneurs.

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Maharlika – PinoyStyle

RP's Charice wows 57,000 Dodger fans

By **POCHOLO CONCEPCION**
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The scene has become almost routine—teenage Filipino singer Charice Pempengco wowing an international crowd with her powerful, soaring vocals.

Except that this time, four days ago, she was singing the “Star Spangled Banner” at the 52nd season-opener of Major League baseball that pitted the Los Angeles Dodgers against arch-rival San Francisco Giants at Dodger Stadium.

Some 57,000 fans witnessed Pempengco’s performance.

The question is, why was Pempengco, a Filipino, made to sing the American national anthem on US soil?

Pempengco herself was wondering, and smiled while saying that she nevertheless enjoyed the experience in an interview aired on ABS-CBN.

So how did she get the gig? At press time Pempengco’s manager in the Philippines wasn’t so sure whether its her talent was directly invited or her ser-

vices were offered by her US manager and talent agency.

A blogger in her jennys-corner.com website enthused: “Wow what an honor for 16-year-old Charice Pempengco to be singing Star Spangled Banner, to think she is not even an American. We are proud of you Charice!”

Powerful talent agency

Pempengco’s career is guided by two groups—one in the Philippines and the other in the United States. All her overseas engagements are decided by Mark Johnson, who is also the manager of Josh Groban. But the one that looks for work for her is Creative Artists Agency (CAA), widely regarded in Hollywood as “the most powerful talent agency in the world.”

CAA’s talent roster is practically a who’s who of A-listers and stars on film and television, and in music and sports.

They include Steven Spielberg, Brad Pitt, Tom Cruise, George Clooney, Drew Barrymore, Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Orlando Bloom, Will Fer-

rell, Will Smith, the “CSI” franchise, the creators and producers of dozens of shows like “American Idol,” Bruce Springsteen, Sting, Radiohead, Green Day, LeBron James, David Beckham, Tony Parker—and the person whom Pempengco has acknowledged as the one who has made her dream come true, Oprah Winfrey.

New role

It was CAA that got Pempengco to audition for a part in the live action/computer generated imagery movie “Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakuel.”

When Pempengco went to the audition, she thought she was just vying for one of the voice parts. But after singing

a few songs and imitating the voices of the three lead Chipmunk characters Alvin, Simon and Theodore, the film’s producers decided to create an entirely new role—Pempengco as herself.

“I was made to play a contravida,” Pempengco told the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in a previous interview. “When the Chipmunks join a singing contest, they are pitted against me.”

Celebrity trivia

By **DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL**
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Here are some celebrity trivia which I picked up along the way to “Controversylandia.” Sweet little “somethings,” anyone?

■ The tattoos all over Robin Padilla’s body are more than just art. Each tattoo has a story behind it.

■ Ai Ai de las Alas is afraid of ghosts. The Comedy Queen also ought to be called “Tulog Queen” because she loves to sleep.

■ Lorna T’s fave scent of all time is Tova (and mine, too). LT hoards as much Tova as she can in the perfume shop where we are both suki.

■ While Ces Drilon was climbing up the mountain during her captivity, she kept saying to herself, “What I would do to have a glass of wine right now!”

■ Ogie Alcasid is hooked on Facebook’s “Farm” feature.

■ Gabby Concepcion isn’t fond of watching himself on TV. He cringes whenever he comes across his old movies on TV.

■ Cesar Montano gets a kick out of watching TV ads when he’s abroad and records his favorite ones.

■ Sunshine Cruz panicked when she woke up and saw red spots all over her face. It turned out that her hubby Buboy was in a playful mood so he placed red dots using Pentel pen on her face while she was asleep.

■ Dingdong Dantes sleeps with his eyes half-open.

■ Diether Ocampo has quit drinking (even wine) for many years now. It makes him feel more alive.

■ Dennis Trillo was an agent for a telecommunications company before he joined show biz.

■ Pops Fernandez isn’t comfy singing in a karaoke bar.

■ Liezl Martinez doesn’t like eating fruits.

■ Regine Velasquez rarely lets others do her make-up. She would rather do it herself. Her dad Mang Jerry once told me, “Nakakalula ang mahal ng make-up niya!”

■ Luke Mejares doesn’t drink cold beer to preserve his voice.

■ Jolina Magdangal has VCD copies of all her TV appearances ever since she started in the biz.

■ Alex Gonzaga is a chocoholic and loves to drink buko juice.

■ In her younger years, Nora Aunor used to pretend she lost her voice when being interviewed by colegialas speaking in straight English.

■ William Martinez is allergic to watermelon.



Charice Pempengco performs at the U.S.-Philippine Expo.

Nora Aunor back with 1st all-original album

By **POCHOLO CONCEPCION**
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Nora Aunor, whose long and checkered career officially began as a singer in the 1960s, is back with a new album. Recorded as an independent production in the United States, the 10-track CD, “Habang Panahon,” is her first attempt to interpret an all-original set of material.

Nine of the songs are credited to the husband-and-wife team of Bodjie Dasig and Odette Quesada, likewise the album producers and backup vocalists. Dasig wrote five of the tracks; Quesada penned one; and the duo collaborated on three cuts. Christine Bendebel composed one song.

The Inquirer received, by e-mail, audio files of five of the songs. Listening to Aunor sing these new songs is refreshing since the bulk of the material she released on Alpha Records were covers.

Her last known album, released by

Universal, was a live recording of a concert, “Handog,” at the Big Dome in 1991 and also featured an all-covers repertoire.

News of the new album’s release has yet to create the loud buzz that it should have on fans’ websites. But the



Aunor

few who have gotten hold of the CD have posted gracious comments, most of them thanking their idol for coming up with a beautiful piece of work.

“Habang Panahon” comes at a time when Aunor has surpassed what could have been the most crippling problem of her complicated life—her arrest and trial for possession of drugs in the United States. Charges were dropped when

she agreed to undergo rehab.

November last year, a CNN Viewer’s Choice Award gave Aunor the highest high: “Himala,” the Ishmael Bernal movie she starred in, was voted the Best Asia-Pacific Film of all time.

Looks like time is on her side.

RUSHES

Wanted: Wedding singer

© *Philippine Daily Inquirer*

Ryan Agoncillo realized that his TV5 show “Talentadong Pinoy” has attracted a loyal audience when strangers started stopping him on the streets, asking if they could audition.

“From the crazies to the genuinely gifted,” Ryan told Rushes’ Bayani San Diego Jr.

The show has gathered a motley crew, including a beat-box trio, a man who peels coconuts with his teeth, snake wranglers and contortionists.

While Ryan was car-racing in Clark, Pampanga, an Aeta kid stood in his way and belted R&B tunes.

Talent scouting is part of his job as host—quite a stretch from his first gig on ABC 5’s “Philippine Idol.”

Every week, Ryan explained, the show is guaranteed to discover talents that are either awe-inspiring or amusing.

Among the most shocking so far was a blade eater. “While I was interviewing him, I could smell and see blood,” Ryan recalled. “Maybe he got nervous. But he wasn’t seriously hurt.”

Such unexpected moments make the show a roller-coaster ride for audiences and show regulars (aside from Ryan) Audie Gemora, Cherie Gil, John Lapus, Eugene Domingo and Amy Perez, among others, who are also called “Talent Scouts.”

“I thought they would be jaded,” Ryan said. “After all, they’ve been in the business for so long. Still, they are truly entertained. Amy once asked a Talentado, ‘Can I hire you for my son’s birthday party?’”

Indeed, some Talentados have been spotted by booking agents and clinched assignments through the program.

Has Ryan found a singer for his

forthcoming wedding to Judy Ann Santos? He laughed and said Judai herself has singled out a ventriloquist with five dummies.

Judai acted as a Talent Scout for Ryan’s birthday special, to be aired April 18 (he turned 30 on April 10.)

Will the ventriloquist be at their wedding? Abangan.

Sarah swims

Sarah Geronimo has bagged another endorsement deal, this time for San Miguel Beverages Inc.’s full line of Magnolia healthy beverages. She is the star of the company’s “Sarap Mag-Reffesh ng Magnolia” campaign. Earlier, she was spokesperson for SMI’s “Mag-Bagong Buhay Na!” which encouraged kids to be healthier through proper diet, hydration and play. Guess how Sarah “plays”? She swims on weekends to take care of her lungs, definitely her power source.

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend’s gabfests on TV. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

Manny Calayan, on reports Katrina Halili will soon endorse his clinic: “Why not? Pagkatapos siya nag-StarStruck, naging alaga ko na si Katrina.” (Anyone wants to look like Katrina?)

Jake Cuenca, on the possibility of reconciling with Roxanne Guinoo: “We have [separate] lives now. Tuwing nakikita ko siya, talagang nakikita kong masaya siya.” (Buti pa siya?)

Ai Ai de las Alas, asked where her happiness is coming from: “Siguro sa kakadasal and ‘yong nag-vow ako ng celibacy. Parang dun ako nag, ‘Ah, ang ganda naman ng buhay, napakagaan.’” (Why not, indeed?)

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

'Wang-wang'

Call her Jackie S. The “interim first lady” of East Timor, Jacqueline Aquino Siapno, is a Filipina political scientist married to Fernando de Araujo, president of the new country’s National Parliament. She was back in the Philippines recently, for what she called a private visit. It was not the determinedly private nature of her visit that caught the attention of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*; it was the resolutely modest way she went a-visiting.

The best way to capture this exemplary modesty is to quote at some length the report written by Inquirer correspondent Gabriel Cardinoza. “After exchanging greetings [at the Manila airport] they [Jackie S. and her mother] took a cab and headed to a bus terminal in Pasay City where they boarded a bus bound for her native Dagupan. The Friday night trip took five hours. At the station, they hailed a tricycle and asked to be taken to their house in Barangay Bonuan Gueset.”

This isn’t merely a charming anecdote: it is an indirect indictment of the way most public officials or political personalities in the Philippines conduct themselves, when traveling. It makes for a good story because it reminds us of the inexhaustibly surprising quality of human nature. But it makes for a front-page story because it offers a contrast to the “wang-wang” culture our political VIPs, both high and petty, take for granted.

Ms Siapno may not know the meaning of “wang-wang”—she has lived abroad for most of her adult life, earning (among other distinctions) a Ph.D. from the University of California in Berkeley—but she should recognize the self-importance her old country’s politicians attach to themselves. Wang-wang is the siren that “very important people” acquire, whether they ride unescorted or as part of a convoy; the sound is a sign that the usual (traffic) rules do not apply to VIPs. They are, obviously, too important.

Already, we can anticipate the objections, the clarifications, that officials who feel alluded to will issue. Her visit, they would say, was a private affair. There is no comparison with their official travel.

Yes, but they would miss the point. Jackie S. could have used or borrowed a private vehicle. That she did not consider herself too good for an ordinary bus or a rickety tricycle tells us more about the dignity of public office than flashing lights and wailing sirens ever can.

But East Timor is a small, impoverished country, other politicians or their hired spokesmen might say. There is no comparison.

Again, they would miss the point. Substantial government resources are spent every year to provide public officials with the illusion that we are already a rich country. Does a Cabinet secretary making the rounds in Metro Manila really need two beige-colored, red-plated AUVs to shadow his gas-guzzling SUV?

You get the point. Or at least we ordinary citizens do. We are not asking our public officials to use public transportation to go to and from work—although that would amount to a moral revolution. We are only asking them to reconsider the sense of entitlement, the sense of inflated dignity they display because of their complicity in the wang-wang culture.

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Truth to tell

Last Sunday, I woke up to read from my favorite newspaper the following missive from my favorite non-president: “In our lives as Christians, we too must prove our love for the truth in His life and His teachings. We must love each other and risk our all for the truth, because God commands us so.”

I do not know how many Filipinos were admitted to hospitals from heart attacks, strokes, and blood pressures that went through the roof last Sunday from reading this. I do know even Ferdinand Marcos did not venture this far. Marcos might have believed in the Big Lie, believing that the bigger the lie the more likely it would be believed, but he also believed in the limits of the Big Lie, pushing it past those limits being a guarantee the Big Lie would burst in your face like an overextended glob of gum. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo does not.

Shortly after calling upon all of us to bathe in Christ’s truth, and shortly after fleeing the horde in Thailand (a preview of what would happen to her here if she persists in staying on), she flew to Dubai. The Malacañang website showed the direction of the propaganda line: “to discuss (with 250 service providers) how the Philippines can fill up large-scale job orders in the region within the year.”

Unfortunately for her, Emmanuel Geslani, who truly wishes to bathe in the waters of truth and live his life as directed by his namesake, had quite another story to tell. Geslani, a 30-year veteran of the recruitment industry, a former vice chair and director of the Philippine Association of Service Exporters Inc., said: “Ms Arroyo may just be wasting taxpayers’ money by flying all the way to Dubai as she may find countless half-built buildings with their cranes motionless, empty malls and starving Filipinos who have lost their jobs.” Dubai, Geslani added, is itself in dire straits, canceling working visas right and left. Or, as in the case of 120 Filipinos who were recruited to Dubai on visitor’s visas, not issuing them at all. Hungry and homeless, the 120 had to seek shelter in the Philippine Embassy.

It’s the OFW situation that needs telling the truth

In our image

Semana Santa in Manila was different this year. Many people have discovered the secret and stayed in the city. I was disappointed to find many cars cruising EDSA on Good Friday because I wanted to experience the thrill of seeing EDSA empty. To get the surreal feeling of being the last person on earth, you had to drive through the small streets in the Makati commercial and business district without residential buildings.

Even the traditional procession in the navel of Makati, Poblacion, was different this year. The faithful seemed to be in a hurry. The religious images atop carriages sported new vestments most of them glittering and fully beaded. Designers called in to update those heavy velvet robes with somber colors, treated some santos like a mannequin for “Project Runway,” resulting in Christ wearing a paisley ensemble. All the images maintained their curly blond or brown locks this year; some manang had probably scolded the creative person who gave Christ a make-over by changing the curly wig for one with long, silky, black hair. I overheard someone in the crowd asking aloud, “Saan ba nagpa-rebond si Cristo? (Where did Christ have his hair straightened?)”

Next year I should find that Bulacan or Laguna town where live people get on the carriages instead of mannequins to recreate scenes of Christ’s Passion. From what I have been told, this provides for some merriment to balance the mood of Lent. A friend recounted how one such procession stopped momentarily. When he inquired why, he was told, “Sandali lang po naihi si Cristo (Christ has to pee).” Another friend went to a town in Bulacan to catch the Senakulo or Passion Play and was disappointed to find out it had been cancelled that year. When he asked why, he was told: “Nabuntis po ang birhen (The virgin got pregnant).”

Years ago when I was doing research on Holy Week rituals, I found out that the music played dur-

above all. But all we’ve gotten are noises from Malacañang to the effect that our great and beloved leader is doing everything to make sure the global cataclysm affects everybody else but us. That is not telling the truth of an order that carries a death sentence.

The real problem isn’t Dubai or the Middle East, humongous as that problem already is. The real problem is the United States and Canada, where the bulk of our remittances comes from, and which are the places currently reeling from the recession. The horror stories abound, dramatized by Ken Karpman who went from being a CEO of an investment house earning \$750,000 per year to being a pizza delivery man earning \$7.29 an hour. He applied for a job after losing his business, and found there was only one available: the one he has right now.

The US is unrecognizable now from what it was early last year. Experts agree that it has been set back by at least 20 years, even if they cannot agree on whether the recession will be turned around or worsen further into an outright depression. To propose that a recipient of the golden egg will not be affected by the goose that lays it being comatose is insane. It is also criminally irresponsible. This is one case where what you don’t know can kill you.

That brings us to one far more vital truth. Which is our life-and-death need for a leader who can tell the truth in these life-and-death times.

Juan Ponce Enrile, who shares Ms Arroyo’s version of passion for truth, and who at one point ages ago projected himself as the new St. Paul struck by enlightenment on the way to Damascus, or the Senate (a thing that encouraged atheism in this country), says his Senate will no longer indulge in petty politics. In response to these dire times, it will instead focus only on things that will improve the wellbeing of Filipinos.



There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

In fact, there is nothing petty about stopping corruption, particularly of the scale wrought by this regime. The only bailout Filipinos need is a bailout from pillage. And in fact, there is nothing petty about politics, especially the kind that assures we can have a leader we can trust—or at least not distrust at every turn. The only other bailout (but which is really the same thing) Filipinos need is a bailout from someone who will asphyxiate if she tells the truth. The only way the Senate may improve the wellbeing of Filipinos is to indulge in the very serious political exercise of making sure there will be elections next year. The rest is up to us, to produce the leader that can inspire us.

The US gives an object lesson there. For all their hardships now, Americans at least have a leader they can trust. And for all his headaches now, Barack Obama at least can count on his people to follow him. Whether he can turn back the recession or not remains debatable. What is not debatable is that without him, America would be worse off. It would not just have a crisis of currency, it would have a crisis of confidence. It would not only have lost wealth, it would have lost direction. It would not just see the death of affluence, it would see the death of freedom.

Obama has a point when he says that the people who put America in this pit are not the best persons to pluck it out of it, given particularly that they offer only more of the same: the war, the whole war, and nothing but the war. Just as well, the one person who put us in this pit is not the best one to pluck us out of it, given particularly that she offers only more of the same: the lie, the whole lie, and nothing but the lie.

God did command his followers to risk their all for truth. I may be mistaken, but last I looked, which was Easter, God in all his glory was not Gloria.

ing the Senakulo had gone way beyond Gregorian chant. The National Anthem was played when Christ ascends into heaven while there was a choice for the Virgin who likewise ascended to heaven after her death. In the scene depicting the Assumption, the band would play “Anchors aweigh” or the rowdy drinking song “Roll out the barrel.”

I was told that in one Senakulo in Morong, Rizal, one of the tunes played was the summer jingle for the ABS-CBN station ID! If you think that is sacrilegious, I once attended a Pabasa contest in Guagua, Pampanga, where two competing groups alternately read the Kapampangan text on Christ’s Passion accompanied not by the town band but by a combo complete with drums and an electric guitar. The text was chanted to different tunes and the first one to run out was the loser. I was shocked to find one group using “Do-re-mi” from “The Sound of Music” to go with text describing Christ being flogged at the pillar. This was the type of thing to get academics going, and it is unfortunate that the pioneering journal of the Cultural Research Association of the Philippines has been discontinued, the association (CRAP) now as extinct as a dodo.

Things are changing very fast and one cannot decide whether to keep old traditions as our parents and grandparents remember it, or to make innovations so these traditions speak to a new generation? When we look at religious images in a church, we identify each one by his or her attributes: the color of the vestments (yellow and green for San Jose, blue and white for the Virgin), by the objects they hold (a hanky with three bloody faces of Christ is Santa Veronica, white keys and a rooster complete San Pedro). In the past people knew all these iconographic symbols and the stories behind the



Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

images, but in the age of PSP and DVD, all those are lost to a younger generation.

In the museum of Baclayon church in Bohol, there is a rare image of St. Lazarus wrapped in bandages, as described in the scriptures, returning from the dead. The same image elicits shrieks today simply because people have forgotten or do not know San Lazaro. For a new generation, San Lazaro is now “The Mummy.”

While reading Emily Bronson Conger’s “An Ohio Woman in the Philippines,” published in 1904, I tried to connect the Iloilo of her time to the Iloilo I know today. She described an image of Christ in Jaro that was “dressed for various festivals in various ways; sometimes in evening dress, with white shirt, diamond stud, rings on the fingers, patent leather shoes, and a derby hat. Sometimes the figure was dressed in royal robes with long purple mantle and gilded crown on the head; on Good Friday it lay in a white shroud as if in death; on Easter Sunday it was arrayed in flowing white robes and was brought from the cemetery into town and borne at the head of a great parade.”

All the images of Christ I have seen come with sandals. This one in shoes with a derby hat is quite intriguing.

It all goes to show that people try to make religion and the Bible stories relevant to their lives by updating the symbols. Everywhere in churches all over the archipelago people make the divine in our image. We see but do not notice, and it will take anthropologists and art historians to study this as a means to help us further understand why we are the way we are.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Samu't Sari



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT
A belated Hau'oli Lā Hānau to our beautiful Weaver girls: Tori, who turned 5 on April 14, and Jojo, who turned 14 on April 17. Both of you have brought so much joy and sunshine into our lives and we wish you both only the very best in life. We love you both very much! From Daddy, Mommies, and Braddah Jus, Doh and Buddy.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday to Joji Abarquez, shown here with her husband Renato Abarquez. More blessings and good health always! May you have a great and wonderful day! Also, advanced 25th wedding anniversary greetings. Thank you both so much for everything. We love you guys very much. From the entire family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Advance happy third birthday greetings to Ryan "Ran-du Boy" Guerrero Duenas, who will be celebrating his birthday tomorrow, April 19, 2009. We love you and hope you enjoy every moment of your day. From Mommy, Daddy and the whole family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



NEW CHRISTIAN
Belated happy Christening to Tiffany Nario, shown here being carried by her mom Jenny, together with brother Khosler, who is being carried by her dad Arnold. Tiffany was baptized Sunday, April 12, 2009, at the San Antonio Church, Saipan. A celebration followed at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort. Greetings coming from the Nario family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Tiffany Nario poses with her family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Front row, Ayumi, Rejoyce and William. Second row, Grandpa Alex carrying Tiffany, brother Khosler, dad Arnold, mom Jenny, grandma Melit, grandma Ampy, uncle Clinton, and grandpa Rey.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



LENTEN TRADITION

Members of the United Filipino Organization dish out congee and other food items to people who trekked to the peak of Mt. Tapochao on Good Friday, April 10, 2009. It has become a traditional practice of UFO to volunteer and give out free food and drinks every Good Friday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



The United Filipino Organization offers free food and drinks, including coffee, to the early morning crowd that is trekking to the peak of Mt. Tapochao on Good Friday, April 10, 2009.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

More than a thousand people trekked to the top of Mt. Tapochao on Good Friday, April 11, 2009, as part of the annual pilgrimage.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Couple Ivan and Malou pose for the camera on their way down from the peak of Mt. Tapochao in the early hours of Good Friday, April 10, 2009. The two began their trek at 4:30am and finished after 7am.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

YoungStyle



In this undated photo released by the French Defense Ministry on Friday, April 10, 2009, suspected pirates, at left, are seen after they were intercepted by marine commandos of the French Navy in the Gulf of Aden, off the coast of Somalia. French navy commandos stormed a French sailboat held by pirates off the Somali coast on Friday, April 10, 2009, in an assault triggered by threats the passengers would be executed. One hostage was killed in the operation, demonstrating the risks of a military operation against sea bandits.

Modern pirates are attacking ships and sailors from many countries

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
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WASHINGTON—You may have heard about the American ship that was taken over by pirates last week off the east coast of Africa. Attacks on commercial ships in that area have been going on for years and have become more frequent. But the attacks didn't become a big story here until a U.S. cargo ship was briefly seized by pirates. In the past 100 years, it has been extremely rare for American ships to be taken by force at sea.

The crew of the *Maersk Alabama*, which was carrying relief supplies to the people of Kenya, managed to take the ship back from the pirates. But the captain of the ship was taken hostage. After several tense days on a lifeboat with the pirates, he was rescued on Sunday by a special opera-

Violent, not funny

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Somali pirates don't wear ruffled shirts and have parrots on their shoulders; they are dangerous criminals. In fact, there never were pirates who looked like the swashbuckling characters from today's toys and movies. The pirates who terrorized ships off America's coast 250 years ago were also violent thieves and were widely feared and hated.

tions team of the U.S. Navy. Three of the four pirates were killed in the rescue; a fourth turned himself in.

In movies and books, pirates are often portrayed as adventurers, while

the criminal side of their actions is played down. But piracy is a dangerous and illegal activity with sometimes tragic results.

The pirates in the recent string of attacks are all from Somalia, an extremely poor African country that hasn't had a stable government in decades. These Somalis have little opportunity to make a living at home, so they have turned to an extreme form of theft. Even with rickety boats and basic weapons, the pirates have overtaken unguarded commercial ships and held them for ransom, which is a payment from the ship's owner to get back the ship and crew.

But paying ransom to get a ship released solves one problem while creating others. Once the pirates get such a payment, they have money to buy more-sophisticated weapons and better boats to attack more ships.

And the money they make encourages other desperate Somalis to become pirates, too.

Enough ransoms have been paid now that some tiny fishing villages in Somalia, once incredibly poor, have become thriving pirate towns.

The U.S. government has a policy to not pay ransoms, but private companies, such as the owner of the *Maersk Alabama*, can.

Now that an American ship has been attacked, the U.S. government is getting more involved in figuring out a way to stop these international thieves. It's a big problem because the pirates are holding numerous ships from other countries, with the ships' crew members, hoping to win large ransom payments. The challenge is getting the ships back without risking the safety of the crews.

How people cleaned their teeth before toothbrushes

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—We bet that a lot of you think brushing your teeth is annoying. You might even try to skip it every now and then, when you think your parents won't catch you!

Well, imagine what your life would be like if you didn't have a modern toothbrush to clean your pearly whites.

You'd do what people did before the toothbrush was invented: Find another way.

Thousands of years ago, people wanted to keep their teeth and gums clean, their breath fresh and their teeth white, just like people do today. They found different

tools with which to do it.

Before toothbrushes, people used rough cloth and water to clean their teeth. They would also rub things like salt and chalk across their teeth to try to get rid of the grime.

The ancient Egyptians made a kind of brush by splitting the end of a twig. And the ancient Chinese chewed on twigs with a special flavor to freshen their breath.

People also used forms of toothpaste that they made out of ingredients you probably wouldn't want to put in your mouth.

Sometimes a powder was made of the ashes of ox hooves and burned eggshells. The ancient Greeks and Romans used materials such as crushed oyster shells and bones.

TOOTH TIP

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Dentists recommend that you get a new toothbrush every three to four months.

The Chinese are believed to have made the first natural-bristle toothbrush in the 1400s by using bristles from pigs' necks. The bristles were attached to a handle made of bone or bamboo.

The first toothbrush that resembles the one you use today was made in England in the 1770s. A man named William Addis came up with the idea while he was in prison, put there for having started a riot. He didn't think the rag he was given was cleaning his

teeth well enough, so he saved a small bone from a meal. He put tiny holes in it and used glue to attach pig bristles he had gotten from a prison guard.

The first patent for a toothbrush was awarded to an American named H.N. Wadsworth in 1857, but it wasn't until the invention of nylon in the 1930s that toothbrushes came to look like the ones you use.

And it wasn't until after World War II that Americans started brushing their teeth regularly. U.S. soldiers brought the daily habit back home with them from abroad, and that helped make the practice popular.

Now go ahead and admit it: It would be pretty gross if you didn't have a toothbrush to clean your teeth, wouldn't it?

By FRED BOWEN
Special to
The Washington Post

Fred Bowen writes is
an author of sports
novels for kids.



Can the Caps score the Stanley Cup?

HOCKEY PLAYOFFS FACT

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

In 1952, Chicago Blackhawks player Bill Mosienko scored three goals in 21 seconds in a game against the New York Rangers. He still holds the record for the fastest hat trick in professional hockey.

The Stanley Cup playoffs started Wednesday night. Despite an opening-round loss to the New York Rangers, the Washington Capitals appear ready for an exciting playoff run. They won the Southeast Division and finished in second place in the Eastern Conference, with 108 points and a record of 50-24-8. Washington has a high-powered attack led by the National Hockey League's leading goal scorer, Alexander Ovechkin. Only two teams, the Detroit Red Wings and the Boston Bruins, scored more goals this season than the Caps.

Washington also earned home-ice advantage in the series against the Rangers. The Caps have been super tough at Verizon Center, with a record this season of 29-9-3. So the Caps should get by the Rangers.

Still, don't make plans for a Stanley Cup parade just yet. Playoff hockey in the NHL is tough and unpredictable.

First, most of the games are close. Last year, 38 of the 85 playoff games, or about 45 percent, were decided by one goal. That means in almost half of the games a fortunate bounce or a spectacular save is the difference. A team has to be good to win the Stanley Cup, but it also has to be lucky.

Washington has not always been lucky during the playoffs. The Capitals were eliminated in a heartbreaking series against the Philadelphia Flyers last year, losing the seventh and deciding game in overtime, 3-2. Longtime Capitals fans remember the 1987 playoffs, when the Caps lost a seventh and deciding game, 3-2, in a fourth overtime to the New York Islanders. The Islanders goaltender, Kelly Hrudey, made 73 saves that night.

Which brings up another important thing about NHL playoff hockey: A goalie on a hot streak can make all the difference. The Caps' starting goalie, Jose Theodore, was solid this season. But Theodore has a losing record in his playoff career. And the Capitals allowed more goals (245) than all but two of the other 15 playoff teams this season. I wonder if the Caps' defense is going to be good enough for them to make a long run in the playoffs.

Finally, most of the Capitals' key players are young and don't have much playoff experience. Ovechkin, Alexander Semin and Nicklas Backstrom are terrific, as is defenseman Mike Green. But Semin is the oldest at 25. And none of them has won an NHL playoff series.

The Capitals have had a great season, and it's always a thrill to be in the playoffs. The Caps are so loaded with young talent that they may go all the way some playoff season. But probably not this one.

Life & Style

Singing 'spinster' strikes chord in talent contest

Susan Boyle lives alone in a row house with her cat Pebbles, a drab existence in one of Scotland's poorest regions. She cared for her widowed mother for years, never married and sang in church and at karaoke nights at the pub.

Neighbors knew she could sing, and now—what with YouTube, Twitter and countless blog postings—just about everyone else does, too.

Since wowing the judges on the TV show "Britain's Got Talent," the frumpy 47-year-old, who says she's never been kissed, has gained celebrity fans and millions of admirers.

"I did this for my late mother," the unemployed Boyle told The Associated Press at her

home in this scruffy Scottish village Thursday. "I wanted to show her I could do something with my life."

And that she did—as well as showing a thing or two to the show's smug judges, who include Simon Cowell of "American Idol" fame.

When she mounted the stage for Saturday's broadcast, her frizzy gray-tinged hair curling wildly and a gold lace dress clinging unflatteringly to her chubby frame, Boyle looked the antithesis of the American idols Cowell normally anoints.

She was greeted with giggles from the audience and eye rolls from the notoriously acerbic Cowell. The audience chuckled

in embarrassment as she wiggled her hips awkwardly.

Then she opened her mouth. Launching into "I Dreamed a Dream," from the musical "Les Misérables," her soaring voice drew startled looks and then delighted smiles from Cowell and the other judges. The audience leapt to its feet to applaud.

More than 11 million people watched Saturday's show, but Boyle's instant success is due as much to new media as to the power of television, with a clip of her performance posted on YouTube by the show's producers drawing nearly 13 million views. Not to mention the skillful packaging of the segment, a mini-opera of underdog triumph.



Susan Boyle, who's performance on the television show "Britain's Got Talent" wowed the judges, gives the thumbs up at her home in Blackburn, Scotland, Thursday April 16, 2009.

Boyle told the AP. "I didn't realize this would be the reaction, I just went on stage and got on with it."

Boyle's hard-scrabble story has only added to the emotional tug of her tale.

The youngest of nine children of a devout Roman Catholic family, she grew up in one of Scotland's most deprived areas, a district blighted by unemployment, crime and social problems. The area has suffered since the local British Leyland car plant shut down in the 1980s.

"Everyone here knew she could sing, and we were always saying, 'You should go in for talent competitions,'" Russell said. "She devoted her life to her mother and father, and when her mother died a couple of years ago she realized it was her turn."

On Saturday night's show, the first of a new season, Boyle told viewers she had "never been kissed" and drew smirks from the judges when she said she wanted to be a professional singer like Broadway legend Elaine Paige.

After she knocked their socks off, judge Piers Morgan said her "stunning" performance was "the biggest surprise I've had in three years of this show." Judge Amanda Holden smiled, nodded and clapped. Cowell called her singing "extraordinary."

"I can hardly remember what happened on the night as I had my eyes closed most of the time," Boyle said. "It really didn't dawn on me what was happening."

Her performance has been a huge Internet hit. Kutcher posted a link on Twitter, declaring, "This just made my night," while Moore wrote Boyle's voice "made me teary!"

"Britain's Got Talent," is the sister show of "America's Got Talent." Both are co-produced by Fremantle Media, the company behind "American Idol," and Cowell's Syco TV. It resembles "American Idol" but contestants aren't limited to singing.

Boyle's millions of fans must now wait to see whether she makes it through the next rounds of the show. The chances appear good she might go all the way: Bookmakers have made her the firm favorite, giving a Boyle victory 5-2 odds.

In Blackburn, her neighbors are rooting for her.

"We're very proud of her," said Angela McKenna, 22. "But we can't understand why she didn't at least put a comb through her hair before she went on TV." (AP)

In the past few days, Boyle has appeared on TV around the world. Her fans include actors Demi Moore and husband Ashton Kutcher who flagged the performance on Twitter, as well as Oprah Winfrey, who has invited Boyle onto her show. Interview requests have poured in.

To friends and neighbors in Blackburn, a community of 4,750 people 20 miles west of Edinburgh, it was not surprising that the talent of a local treasure should finally be recognized.

"Susan can't help herself. She just sings whenever she can sing," said Jackie Russell, manager of Blackburn's Happy Valley Hotel, where Boyle sings karaoke amid the slot machines and beer-stained carpet. "We weren't surprised by her talent, but we were surprised by the reaction around the world."

Boyle herself seems ill at ease with her newfound fame. At her modest, government-subsidized home Thursday, she seemed more at ease making tea for visiting TV crews than answering questions about her life. She did mug for the cameras, however, crooning into a hairbrush.

"It has been surreal for me,"

In an irony not lost on local residents, the Happy Valley Hotel sits on the grimy main street, close to a liquor store and boarded-up shops. "It's a bit of a joke, isn't it... There's nothing to be happy about around here," said Susan Williams, a 23-year-old fan of Boyle's karaoke performances there.

As a child, Boyle had learning difficulties, struggled in school and was bullied by other children. At 47, she still is.

"She is often taunted by local kids. They think she's an oddball, but she's a simple soul with genuine warmth," neighbor Stewart Mackenzie said. "Not many people these days are devoutly religious or would spend their time devoted to their parents to the point they'd find themselves a spinster."

A keen amateur singer, Boyle performed in church choirs and school plays and was a regular on the karaoke circuit in Blackburn and the nearby town of Bathgate. She has said her mother, Bridget, encouraged her to enter "Britain's Got Talent"—but it was only after her death that she plucked up the courage to do it.

Film icon Paul Newman joins Conn. Hall of Fame

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—Oscar-winning actor and longtime Connecticut resident Paul Newman has joined fellow actor Katharine Hepburn, humorist Mark Twain and baseball great Jackie Robinson in the Connecticut Hall of Fame.

Newman was inducted posthumously Thursday at the state Capitol, where the longtime Westport resident was remembered for his award-winning acting career and wide array of philanthropic works.

Newman, who died in September at age 83, set up camps for severely ill children and launched his Newman's Own

foods line in 1983 on a lark—a joking venture that, to date, has raised \$265 million for charities worldwide. "The moment it made a profit, Paul said, 'Give



Newman

it away, this wasn't supposed to happen," said Newman's Own Foundation President and CEO Robert Forrester, who accepted the award. "Connecticut was the soil in which he really planted his philanthropic enterprises."

Newman's wife, fellow Oscar-winning actress Joanne Woodward, did not attend the event.

Newman won one Oscar and took home two honorary ones, and had major roles in more than 50 motion pictures, including "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," "The Sting," "Slapshot" and "Absence of Malice."

Newman becomes the eighth member of the Connecticut Hall of Fame, established to honor current and former state residents who distinguish themselves in their profession and perform outstanding civic service.

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17 Again

Friday	4:00	7:05	9:30
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:05
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:05
Mon thru Thurs	4:00	7:05	

Zac Efron, Leslie Mann
 Fantasy, Comedy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

A middle-aged father wakes up to find he's seventeen again. So, he enrolls in the same high school as his children to be close to them. And in trying to recapture his best years, Mike could lose the best things that ever happened to him.



Crank: High Voltage

Friday	4:10	7:25	9:55
Saturday	1:15	4:10	7:25
Sunday	1:15	4:10	7:25
Mon thru Thurs	4:10	7:25	

Jason Statham, Amy Smart
 Action, Thriller, Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis

Hitman Chev Chelios is kidnapped by a mysterious Chinese mobster. Three months later, he wakes up to discover his nearly indestructible heart has been surgically removed and replaced with a battery-operated ticker that requires regular jolts of electricity in order to work. After a dangerous escape from his captors, Chev is on the run again, this time from the charismatic Mexican gang boss El Huron and the Chinese Triads, headed by the dangerous 100-year-old elder Poon Dong.



State of Play

Friday	4:20	7:10	9:45
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:10
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:10
Mon thru Thurs	4:20	7:10	

Russel Crowe, Ben Affleck
 Drama, Political • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

D.C. reporter Cal McCaffrey untangles a mystery of murder and collusion among some of the nation's most promising political and corporate figures. Handsome, unflappable U.S. Congressman Stephen Collins is the future of his political party: an honorable appointee who serves as the chairman of a committee overseeing defense spending. All eyes are upon the rising star to be his party's contender for the upcoming presidential race.



Observe and Report

Friday	4:15	7:30	10:00
Saturday	1:10	4:15	7:30
Sunday	1:10	4:15	7:30
Mon thru Thurs	4:15	7:30	

Seth Rogen, Anna Faris
 Comedy • Rated R



You Changed My Life

Friday	4:30	7:15	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:30	7:15
Sunday	1:25	4:30	7:15
Mon thru Thurs	4:30	7:15	

John Lloyd Cruz, Sarah Geronimo
 Romance, Comedy • Rated NR



Fast & Furious

Friday	4:25	7:20	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:25	7:20
Sunday	1:30	4:25	7:20
Mon thru Thurs	4:25	7:20	

Vin Diesel, Paul Walker
 Action, Thriller • Rated PG 13



Monsters vs. Aliens

Friday	4:05	7:00	9:35
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:00
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:00
Mon thru Thurs	4:05	7:00	

Reese Witherspoon, Hugh Laurie
 Action, Comedy, Animated • Rated PG

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Camo-wearing woman arrested at Spears home

CALABASAS, Calif. (AP)—Authorities have arrested a camouflage-wearing, camera-toting woman they say was caught peeking into Britney Spears' windows.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department arrested Miranda Tozier-Robbins on Thursday morning after security guards

stopped her at Spears' suburban Calabasas home. Deputies say the 26-year-old was issued a citation for trespassing and disorderly conduct and released.

The incident happened hours before Spears was scheduled to perform the first of two shows this week in Los Angeles. The

27-year-old singer's whereabouts at the time of the incident are unknown. The sheriff's department said it did not know, and an e-mail sent to Spears' publicist was not immediately returned.

Sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore said it was unclear what the woman was up to. Jail

records did not indicate whether Tozier-Robbins has an attorney.

Spears recently moved from her hilltop home in Los Angeles. Her former home was prone to spying by the paparazzi, who occasionally staked out a fire access road to try to get shots of the 27-year-old.

'Biggest Loser' trainer calls players 'half-dead'

NEW YORK (AP)—Contestants on "The Biggest Loser" aren't just overweight. They suffer from being not normal and even half-dead.

That's according to Jillian Michaels, the buff, tough-talking trainer on the hit weight-loss show.

Michaels said she would never insult the plus-size players she is helping trim down. But sometimes they need an extra push to get the lead out.

"I push them really hard," the fitness guru said this week. "They are 400 ... pounds! Hello! They are not just going to get on the treadmill and run. It doesn't work that way."

The "Biggest Loser" contestants need special attention, and Michaels said her aim is to provide it.

"A normal person, I could be like 'OK, mama, jump up there. Warm up five minutes.' You'd be like, 'OK.'"

"THESE people are half-dead. I mean, it's not the same."

Michaels marveled that anyone could misinterpret her training style.

"People are like, 'She's so mean to them.' And it's like, 'Really? Do you REALLY think so? Do you really watch the show?' ... Now if I was calling them names, that would be mean."

"The Biggest Loser" airs Tuesdays on NBC.

Jennifer Jason Leigh to light up 'Weeds'



Leigh

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jennifer Jason Leigh will be lighting up "Weeds" next season.

Showtime says the 47-year-old actress will appear on the fifth season of the hit dramedy, which premieres June 8 on Showtime. Leigh will appear in "at least two episodes" as the older sister of Mary-Louise Parker's character.

Leigh's film credits include "Fast Times at Ridgemont High," "Single White Female" and "Margot at the Wedding."

Fashion-conscious daughter is embarrassed by her mom

DEAR ABBY: The way my mother dresses has me so embarrassed I don't want to be seen in public with her. Her hair looks as if she's stuck her finger in a light socket, her clothes are three sizes too big, she wears no makeup. It looks as if she just rolled out of bed, no matter where she is going.



Dear Abby

Mom held a dinner party for my birthday, and even my boyfriend did a double take when he walked in and saw her wearing a giant T-shirt that came to her mid-thigh. Abby, she wasn't even wearing a bra! When I mentioned it to her the next day, she just laughed it off.

I take pride in my appearance. I realize that not everyone is as concerned as I am about their appearance. But shouldn't she respect others enough to at least look decent? Am I being conceited, or should she be given a makeover?

MORTIFIED IN EUGENE

DEAR MORTIFIED: Has your mother always been unkempt and careless about her appearance, or is this something new? If it's something new, then she does not need a makeover; she needs a checkup from her doctor. If she has always presented herself this way, then I doubt she is open to change. Makeovers can work wonders, but they are successful only if the person is willing to admit that one is needed.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My grandmother died while I was out of the country on a two-week vacation. My dad left when I was in second grade, and she raised me along with my mother. We were very close. I always took care of her and made time to spend with her.

Although she had been in poor health for two years, Grandma was not in critical condition when I left. She passed away three days before I was to return, and my family held her funeral the day before I arrived.

I had expressed my wishes that they wait if at all possible. They did not, and I feel betrayed. We have always been close, and now I am so hurt and angry that I don't even want to see them. Can you offer any advice?

CRUSHED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR CRUSHED: Please accept my sympathy for your loss. It is regrettable that the funeral could not be postponed, but there may have been extenuating circumstances.

Your feelings of anger are a part of your grieving process, and it is important that you work them through. It would be helpful for you to discuss this with your clergyman so he or she can guide you to a grief support group. Please don't wait. The sooner you resolve this, the better it will be for you and your family, who I am sure are also grieving.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When dining out and someone asks for the salt (or any other item at the table) should you (a) use it first and then pass it, or (b) pass it first and then ask for it back?

BETH IN WOODSTOCK, ILL.

DEAR BETH: When someone asks you to pass the salt, you should hand both the salt and pepper shakers at the same time, without helping yourself first. The same goes for any other item.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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AP
In this May 12, 2008 file photo, TV personality Jillian Michaels attends the NBC Universal Experience as part of upfront week in New York.

'American Idol' concert tour starts in July

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The top 10 "American Idol" contestants know how they're spending their summer vacation: on a nationwide concert tour kicking off in July in Oregon.

Tickets for the 50-city tour will go on sale May 9, tour organizers said.

The tour is set to begin July 5 in Portland, Ore., then hopscotch to California, Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, New York and Pennsylvania before ending in New Hampshire in September. Details are available at <http://www.americanidol.com>.

Finalists on the tour are Adam Lambert, Allison Iraheta, Anoop Desai, Danny Gokey, Kris Allen, Lil Rounds, Matt Giraud, Megan Joy, Michael Sarver and Scott MacIntyre.

The Fox singing contest has pared the field down to seven contestants, with the winner to be crowned on the May 20 finale. Joy, Sarver and MacIntyre have been voted off by viewers. Giraud was spared the ax when judges used their one-time "save" and kept him on the show.



AP
In this image released by Fox, the top ten finalists for season 8 of "American Idol," clockwise from top left, Michael Sarver, Scott MacIntyre, Allison Iraheta, Adam Lambert, Anoop Desai, Matt Giraud, Danny Gokey, Lil Rounds, Megan Joy, and Kris Allen are shown in Los Angeles on Wednesday, March 18, 2009.

Tour of 'Dreamgirls' set to play the Apollo

NEW YORK (AP)—"Dreamgirls" will play the Apollo—then hit the road.

Producer John Breglio (BRAY-lee-oh) says a national tour of the hit musical will premiere at Harlem's legendary theater later this year. The show will play a four-week, limited engagement, from Nov. 7 to Dec. 5, before beginning

its journey.

No casting has been announced for the revival, which will be directed and choreographed by Bobby Longbottom.

The original opened on Broadway in 1981 and ran for more than 1,500 performances. There also was the 2006 movie in which Jennifer Hudson won a supporting-actress Oscar.

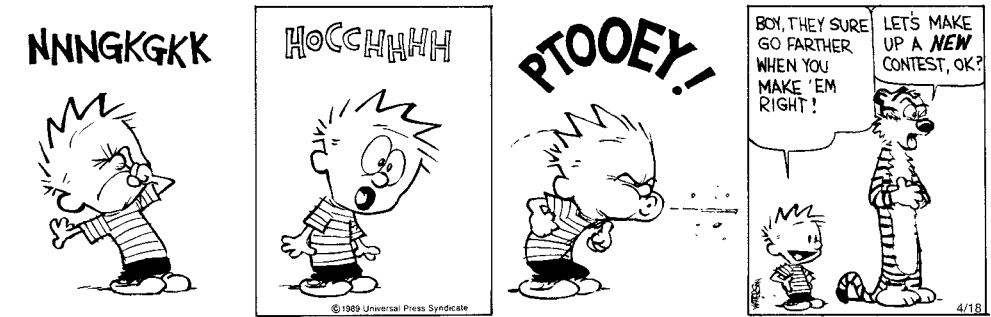
In this file undated photo originally provided by Paramount Pictures, Anika Noni Rose, left, Beyonce Knowles and Jennifer Hudson, right, perform in the film "Dreamgirls."



AP

Pastimes

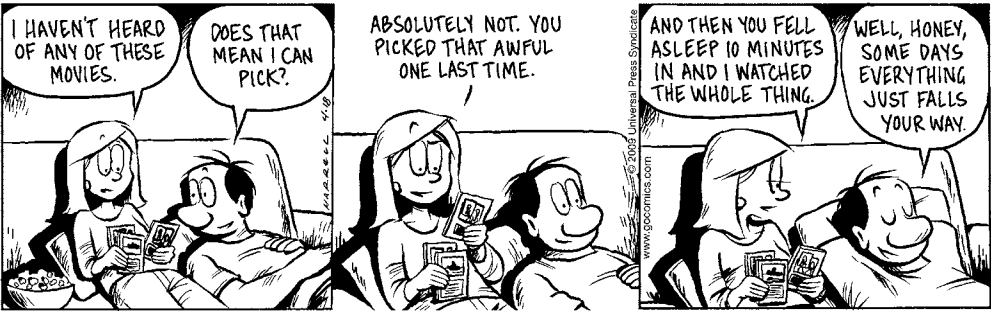
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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Modern-day evidence
4 Leading man?
8 Cumberbund
12 Charged bit
13 Macadamize
14 Shake in the grass?
15 — Remo, Italy
16 Bluenose
17 Jack-in-the-pulpit, e.g.
18 Macabre cartoonist
21 Fellows
22 Quilters' get-together
23 Berle's repertoire
26 Haley's "Oz" costume
27 Hot tub
30 Sutherland solo
31 Eviscerate
32 Harbor structure
33 Grow

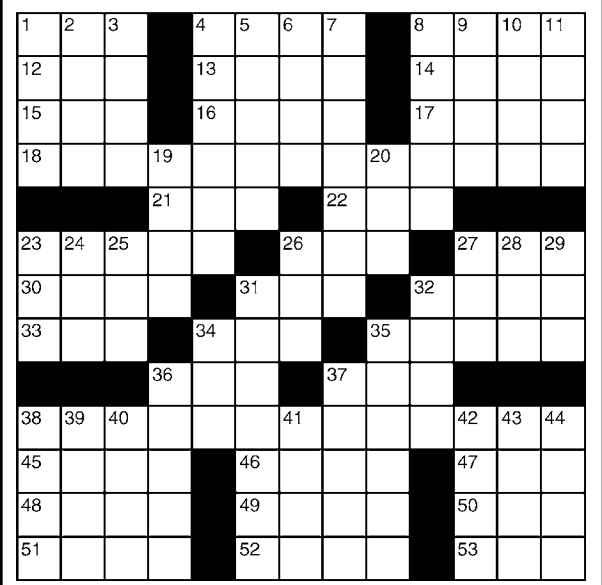
DOWN

1 Platter
2 Ancient mariner
3 Writer
4 Halloween party
5 Challenge
6 Hertz rival
7 Computer info
8 Tint
9 Atmosphere
10 Run-down
11 Muggers?
12 Winning score in darts
13 Mad-houses
14 Super-hero's garment
15 Perjurer
16 Consequently
17 Distort

Solution time: 27 mins.

A	S	S	C	A	P	D	I	G	U	P
M	I	L	A	B	U	E	M	O	T	E
A	N	A	K	I	D	N	A	P	P	E
I	A	N	E	D	G	E	D			
N	I	G	H	E	Y	E	S	O	M	E
	A	M	S	D	A	P	P	E	R	
C	L	A	R	A	L	A	T	T	E	
R	A	P	P	E	R	T	A	R		
O	B	E	Y	A	L	E	K	I	T	H
B	U	G	Z	A	P	P	E	R	I	R
O	R	I	O	N	U	S	A	L	E	E
W	I	N	G	S	P	A	Y	E	S	

Yesterday's answer 4-18



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CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Melissa Joan Hart, 33; Maria Bello, 42; Conan O'Brien, 46; Eric Roberts, 53

Happy Birthday: You can make some interesting changes this year, philosophically, personally or even geographically. Being in the right place at the right time will enable you to make critical moves, molding your future in a positive manner. Helping others will bring you everything you need to further your own objectives. Your numbers are 2, 8, 12, 26, 28, 31, 47

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't fret over the little things. A call for help will lead to someone you have helped in the past. That person will introduce you to people pertinent to your goals. The future looks bright even if the present is causing you to panic. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Someone may try to force his or her will on you. You cannot fold because you are fearful of the outcome. You have just as much to offer as anyone else and shouldn't fall victim to a bully. Allow time for things to settle down. **

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will make progress as long as you don't let anyone take advantage of your generosity and good nature. Don't trust a deal that is too good to be true. Use your common sense. Set the stage for a romantic evening. *****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Keep a tight hold on your cash. If something isn't necessary, don't buy it and back away from anyone pestering you for something.

Plan to do something with your friends or family that will bring you all closer together. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be disillusioned by someone's misleading or gossip. A meddler should be dealt with promptly. Strive for perfection and it will make a statement about who you are and what you stand for. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your ability to think outside the box, adding imaginative and inventive suggestions, will dazzle the people you are dealing with. A sudden change in your financial situation can cause a chain reaction. Remain calm and refuse to change. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Someone from your past will help you see what you have and what you should be doing to make your life better. Don't overspend—chances are you forgot about a debt you owe. Love doesn't have to cost you. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Socializing with friends or networking within your industry will pay off in the information you discover. Someone you are emotionally attached to will feel insecure and will probably cause you grief. Include him or her in your activities. **

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be on guard to counteract any potential losses. Don't sign a contract just to make someone else unhappy. You have to be satisfied with the deal or you will have regrets. ****

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will be on top of your game. Your high spirit and command over anything you do

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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will send a signal that you mean business and you play to win. Talk over any problems and you will resolve issues and enjoy the outcome. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Emotions will be hard to control and could lead to your doing something out of the ordinary. Taking on too much or exaggerating or overspending will cause problems later in the month. Gauge your options carefully. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You should be able to get someone you haven't been able to budge in the past to help you out now. Talk about your plans. Your demands will be met but make sure you have what it takes to deliver the goods. ***

Birthday Baby: You know how to please and are always creative in whatever you do. You are competitive, powerful and persistent. You are subtle and intuitive.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

				7	8					
						2			1	
		1						8	5	
			2			6			7	
		5		6		8				
3		8			1					
2	3					9				
4		6								
			4	5						

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 4/18

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	1	4	9	8	2	7	3	5
9	3	5	7	6	4	1	2	8
2	7	8	3	5	1	6	4	9
7	5	2	6	4	9	8	1	3
8	6	9	1	2	3	4	5	7
1	4	3	5	7	8	2	9	6
5	2	1	8	9	6	3	7	4
4	9	6	2	3	7	5	8	1
3	8	7	4	1	5	9	6	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 3/17

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WONDERWORD® By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MASAI MARA, KENYA Solution: 9 letters

T N A H P E L E V R E S E R G
R S E I M P A L A K R I V E R
D O E P N G N I H C A O P O N
E R A E O A A E R U T L U V A
T E I M B L Z R Y B L T R R E
N C R T R E E N B R E A A A N
E O A P A S D T A E A M Y G A
T N F V L C E L N T Z I E O R
S I A S O A A R I A S R D S R
U H S S E R I C E W E E K T E
G R O G I P A N I N L Y E R T
U P D K O M A S D A G N L I I
A O R T N E B E M A G E A C D
L A S I A N A A N E Y H T H E
P R E D A T O R I D G E D I M

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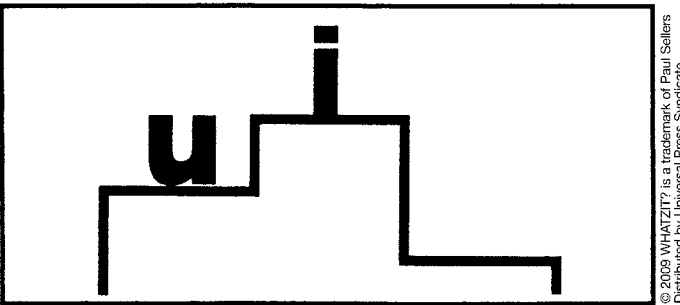
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09-011	Instructor, Accounting/Business	Until Filled
09-016	Business Department Chair/Instructor	Until Filled
09-019	Counselor (Disability Service Coordinator)	Until Filled
09-023	Instructor, Education	Until Filled
09-024	Instructor, Education	Until Filled
09-027	Program Manager I (EDUP Program)	Until Filled
09-028	Program Manager I (UCEDD Program)	Until Filled
09-029	Financial Aid Specialist I or II	4/20/09 or Until Filled
09-030	Budget Officer	4/20/09 or Until Filled
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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2007

Guard files sex harassment suit vs principal. PAGE 3

2 hurt in Puerto Rico vehicular crash. PAGE 5

There is still hope for nonimmigrant students

all alien workers in the CNMI who are appealing to U.S. lawmakers to retain the provision in the federalization bills that would grant nonimmigrant status to long-term alien workers.

In her message, expected to be read during today's prayer vigil at the American Memorial Park's Amphitheater, Doromal urged alien workers to "strong" as she vowed to continue reporting them "until..."

joins M...

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235- NEWS

As playoffs start, does a LeBron-Kobe final await?

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**
AP BASKETBALL WRITER



When Kobe Bryant was last seen in the playoffs, he was hopeless and helpless as his Los Angeles Lakers were being run over in Boston in Game 6 of the NBA finals.

LeBron James never even got to a sixth game in his first time on the big stage, as Cleveland was quickly swept away by San Antonio.

Now, with one big injury in the Eastern Conference and too many flawed teams in the West, one of the superstars has a good chance of getting the ending he wants this time.

"If I'm not competing for the NBA championship, then I'm wasting my time and I'm wasting my teammates' time," James said. "To be in a position to be in the playoffs and to be in a position to fight for the NBA championship, I'm looking forward to it."

The playoffs begin this weekend, with James and the Cavaliers hosting Detroit on Saturday in their opener. Also Saturday, Boston—without the injured Kevin Garnett—faces Chicago, Dallas visits San Antonio in a rematch of a recent postseason thriller, and Portland welcomes Houston for its first playoff game since 2003.

Bryant and the Lakers get started Sunday against the Utah Jazz. Then, Orlando hosts Philadelphia, NBA scoring leader Dwyane Wade leads Miami into Atlanta, and the New Orleans Hornets visit Denver.

Cleveland finished with a league-best 66-16 record and has home-court advantage throughout the postseason. That means someone is going to have to beat the Cavaliers in their arena, where they were 39-2 this season—and that second loss came in the regular-season finale when James didn't play.

They gives them a solid chance to get back to the finals, where they were swept by the Spurs two years ago after mustering the worst offensive performance in the history of the championship round. This version is much better on that end, thanks in large part to Mo Williams, who delivered an All-Star season in his first year in Cleveland.

Their road won't be easy, though. Few teams can match the postseason experience of the Pistons, who have made six straight trips to the conference finals. After that could be the explosive Wade, followed by perhaps the defending champion Celtics.

And unlike in 2007, when the Cavaliers weren't viewed as title contenders, this time they won't sneak up on anyone.

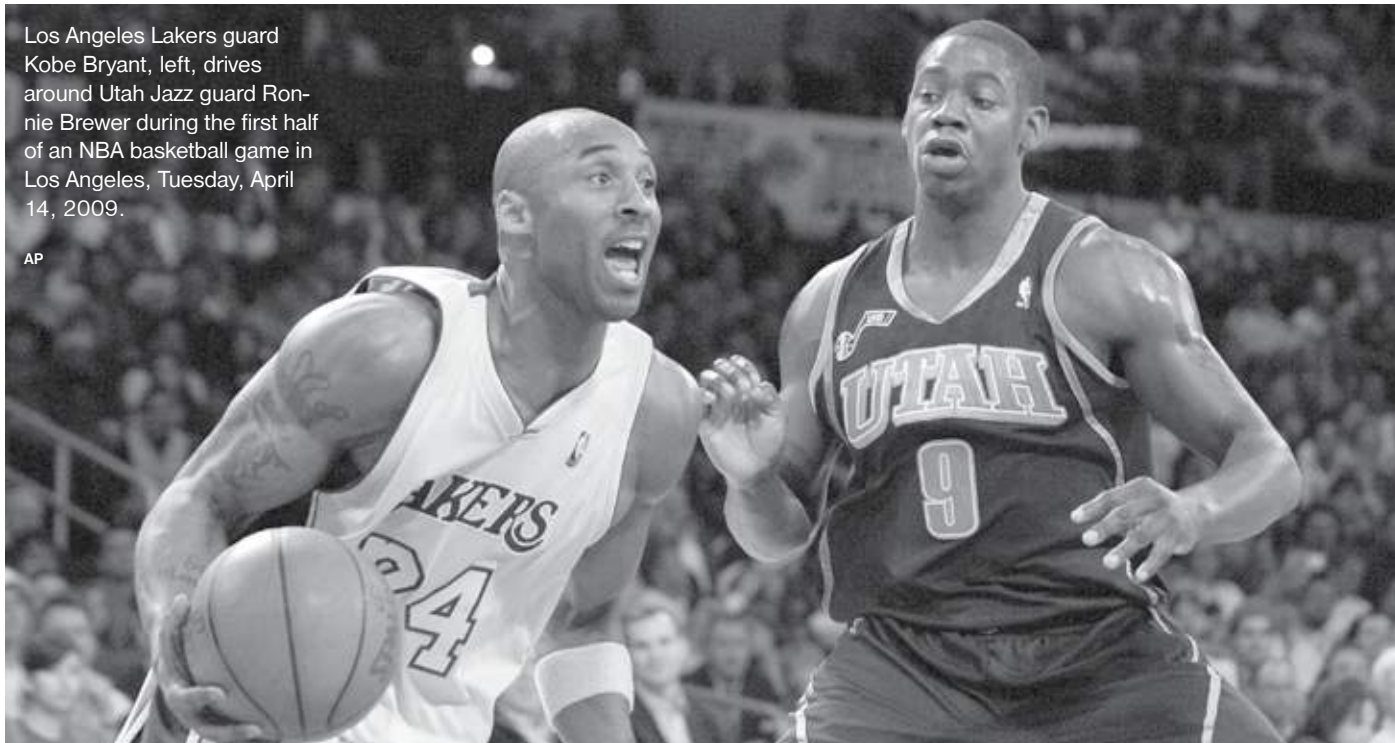
"They'll be facing the kind of pressure we felt last year being the No. 1 seed," Boston coach Doc Rivers said.

That's nothing compared to Rivers' problems.

Rivers said Thursday that Garnett won't be ready for the postseason opener and may not

Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, left, drives around Utah Jazz guard Ronnie Brewer during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Tuesday, April 14, 2009.

AP



Celtics' Kevin Garnett could miss all of playoffs

WALTHAM, Mass. (AP)—Kevin Garnett isn't ready to start the playoffs, and Boston Celtics coach Doc Rivers said Thursday that there's a strong possibility that he will miss the entire postseason.

"He's not going to be ready. After watching him practice, there's no way," Rivers said on WEEI-AM. "The way I saw him move today, I don't know if he'll be ready."

When asked to clarify, Rivers said there was a chance Garnett could be out for the rest of the

season. Celtics spokesman Jeff Twiss said he could not elaborate on Rivers' comments.

Garnett injured his right knee Feb. 19 and missed the next 13 games before returning for four, but never playing as many as 18 minutes. With the Celtics assured of a high playoff berth, Rivers then held Garnett out with an eye toward bringing him back for the last three games of the regular season; that became the last two, then the last one, but he never made it back.

Rivers said Thursday he watched Garnett run at the team's practice facility and said he had to shut him down after 20 minutes.

"If he can't get through biking and working out without swelling and his leg locking, I don't know how you can play in the playoffs," Rivers said. "This was an honest run today, you couldn't make your way through it. The guy's a warrior, you see him try to mask his way through it. But after 20 minutes of running, I don't see

it. After today, there's no way he can play."

Garnett's reaction?

"He was frustrated. He was mad at me, mad at everybody. Then he understood," Rivers said. "He put up a fight. He's really frustrated, but that's Kevin. That's why we got him, because he cares so much."

The defending NBA champions begin the best-of-seven first round series against the Chicago Bulls on Saturday.

"We're going to move on without him," Rivers said.

Celtics GM Danny Ainge has mild heart attack

BOSTON (AP)—Boston Celtics general manager Danny Ainge was hospitalized Thursday after suffering what the team described as a minor heart attack.

The team issued a brief statement saying that Ainge, 50, was taken to a Boston hospital but provided few other details.

"Danny Ainge is recovering at Massachusetts General Hospital after having a minor heart attack. He is recovering nicely," the team said. "Mr. Ainge is expected to remain in the hospital for a few days."

A spokeswoman for Massa-

chusetts General Hospital referred comment to the team.

The news was first reported by WCVB, a Boston TV station.

"All of Celtics Nation is thankful that Danny got incredible medical care so quickly and so effectively," Celtics owner Wyc Grousbeck said. "We wish him, Michelle and the kids all the best and know he will be back with us very soon."

A member of two Celtics championship teams in the 1980s with the original Big Three of Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Robert Parish, Ainge was an NBA All-Star in 1988.

As general manager, Ainge helped the franchise raise its record 17th NBA championship last season by assembling a new Big Three, acquiring Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen to join Celtics veteran Paul Pierce. Ainge was named 2007-08 NBA executive of the year and in October was rewarded with a contract extension and the title of president of basketball operations.

The Celtics are scheduled to begin the playoffs on Saturday against the Chicago Bulls. Earlier Thursday, the Celtics said Garnett was unlikely to return

from a knee injury to play in the postseason—a potentially devastating blow to their hopes of a repeat championship.

Ainge missed Wednesday night's regular-season finale because he wasn't feeling well. He woke up in the morning with chest pains.

Ainge was a standout basketball player at Brigham Young, winning the Wooden Award awarded to the nation's top college player in 1981. He also played three seasons of pro baseball, batting .269 over 211 games for the Toronto Blue Jays.

Nuggets' Martin won't apologize to Joe Maloof

DENVER (AP)—Sacramento Kings owner Joe Maloof won't be getting an apology from Denver Nuggets forward Kenyon Martin for his hard foul on Spencer Hawes earlier this week.

"Apologize to him? I'm not apologizing to him. I apologized to Spencer after the game, but before he opens his mouth he needs to know what's going on," Martin said.

Hawes strained his troublesome left knee on a scary play in Denver Monday night.

Martin fouled Hawes as the Kings center was going for a layup in the first quarter of

Denver's 118-98 win. Hawes landed awkwardly and his knee swelled up. He returned after a timeout to shoot the free throws but then left for the locker room and didn't return.

Martin received a flagrant foul, something he said after the game was undeserved.

An MRI back in California revealed a strain but no further damage to Hawes' knee, and he missed Sacramento's season finale Wednesday at Minnesota.

The *Sacramento Bee* reported Wednesday that Maloof called Martin's actions

"thuggery" and said Martin "needs to apologize to Spencer and our organization."

Hawes underwent microfracture surgery on the knee several years ago, and had further surgery to repair a torn meniscus in the same knee 18 months ago.

Martin, who has had a resurgent season after coming back from microfracture surgery on both knees, was taken aback over Maloof's criticism and demand for an apology.

"I'm not apologizing to him whatsoever. I don't owe him or the Sacramento Kings an apol-

ogy," Martin said. "I apologized to the person I needed to apologize to when I saw him when I was leaving the game."

Martin added a dig at Maloof, whose team finished with the worst record in the NBA this season at 17-65.

"If you don't know the circumstances—he wasn't there, he wasn't in Denver—then he should worry about his team getting better and getting out of last place," Martin said.

The Nuggets, the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference, open the playoffs Sunday against New Orleans.

Lakers—if they get that far.

"I hate to be so frank, but I do not believe they have a chance (to repeat)," former NBA star and TNT analyst Chris Webber said. "KG, as far as how good he is and playing against him and seeing how he energizes the whole team, I don't care who you are, you can't do that from the bench."

Garnett was the key to a Boston frontcourt that pushed around the Lakers in the finals last year, which ended with the Celtics' 131-92 rout in Game 6. This time, it's Los Angeles that is healthy up front, with Andrew Bynum back from a knee injury to anchor the middle.

Bynum, who missed the postseason last year because of a knee injury, scored 22 points Tuesday in a victory over Utah that set up a rematch between the teams in the first round.

"I am very, very, very excited," Bynum said. "I have never played in an NBA playoff game—well, I played in Phoenix for a minute, but that doesn't really count. I think I have a great chance to help push us over the hump."

The Lakers didn't need Bynum to storm through the West playoffs last year, winning 12 of 15 games. They'll be favored to get through again with so many potential opponents entering at a disadvantage.

San Antonio? No Manu Ginobili.

Portland? Too young.

New Orleans? Too injury prone.

Utah? Can't win on the road.

Denver might have the best chance, finally having earned home-court advantage in the first round after five straight exits. The Nuggets have a clutch postseason performer in Chauncey Billups, the 2004 finals MVP whose early season acquisition sparked a division title run from a team that began the season as an afterthought.

The all-Texas matchup between Dallas and San Antonio could be one of the highlights of the first round. The Southwest Division rivals met in the 2006 West semifinals, where the Mavericks won Game 7 in overtime on the Spurs' home floor en route to the NBA finals.

It's been mostly playoff misery since then for Dallas. The Mavs blew a 2-0 lead to Miami in those finals, were embarrassed as the No. 1 seed by Golden State in the first round in 2007, then lost again in the first round last year.

This time, they come in after a strong finish that vaulted them to the No. 6 seed after flirting with eighth and a dreaded matchup with the Lakers.

And just like James and Bryant, the Mavs are looking for a different script.

"What you want to do is get hot. That usually means you're doing everything better," coach Rick Carlisle said. "Hey, there are 16 teams wanting to do that. I don't think we're any different than the other 15 teams. We've been playing well, we want to continue to move in an upward direction."

play at all because of his right knee injury. The Celtics have

been able to keep winning without their leader and perhaps have

enough with Paul Pierce and Ray Allen to keep doing so early in

the playoffs, but certainly would miss him against the Cavs or

Yanks open new stadium with 10-2 loss



NEW YORK

(AP)—After an 85-year-run in a stadium that produced 26 World Series titles, New York saw its hitters fizzle and its bullpen come apart on a sunny Thursday afternoon in a 10-2 loss to the Cleveland Indians.

Jhonny Peralta broke a seventh-inning tie with a two-run double off Jose Veras, and Grady Sizemore hit a grand slam into the right-field seats off Damaso Marte. Victor Martinez's solo homer capped a nine-run burst.

Yankees batters stranded 10 runners in the first five innings, going 0-for-7 with runners in scoring position. The primary cheers were for Jorge Posada, who hit the first home run in the ballpark's history, a fifth-inning drive off Cliff Lee that landed in Monument Park behind center field.

CC Sabathia, pitching in pinstripes for the first time since signing a \$161 million, seven-year contract, allowed an RBI double to Kelly Shoppach in the fourth. But he left after 122 pitches and 5 2-3 innings in his first start against his former team.

White Sox 3, Rays 2

At St. Petersburg, Fla., John Danks pitched six strong innings and Jermaine Dye hit a two-run homer to lead Chicago.

Danks (1-0) limited the AL champions to two hits and had a shutout until Carlos Pena homered with one out in the sixth. Dioner Navarro had the other hit off the left-hander, a two-out single in the second inning.

Dye homered off Jeff Niemann (0-2) in the second. The White Sox wasted several opportunities to break the game open against the right-hander, including the sixth, when they loaded the bases with one out and failed to score.

Angels 5, Mariners 1

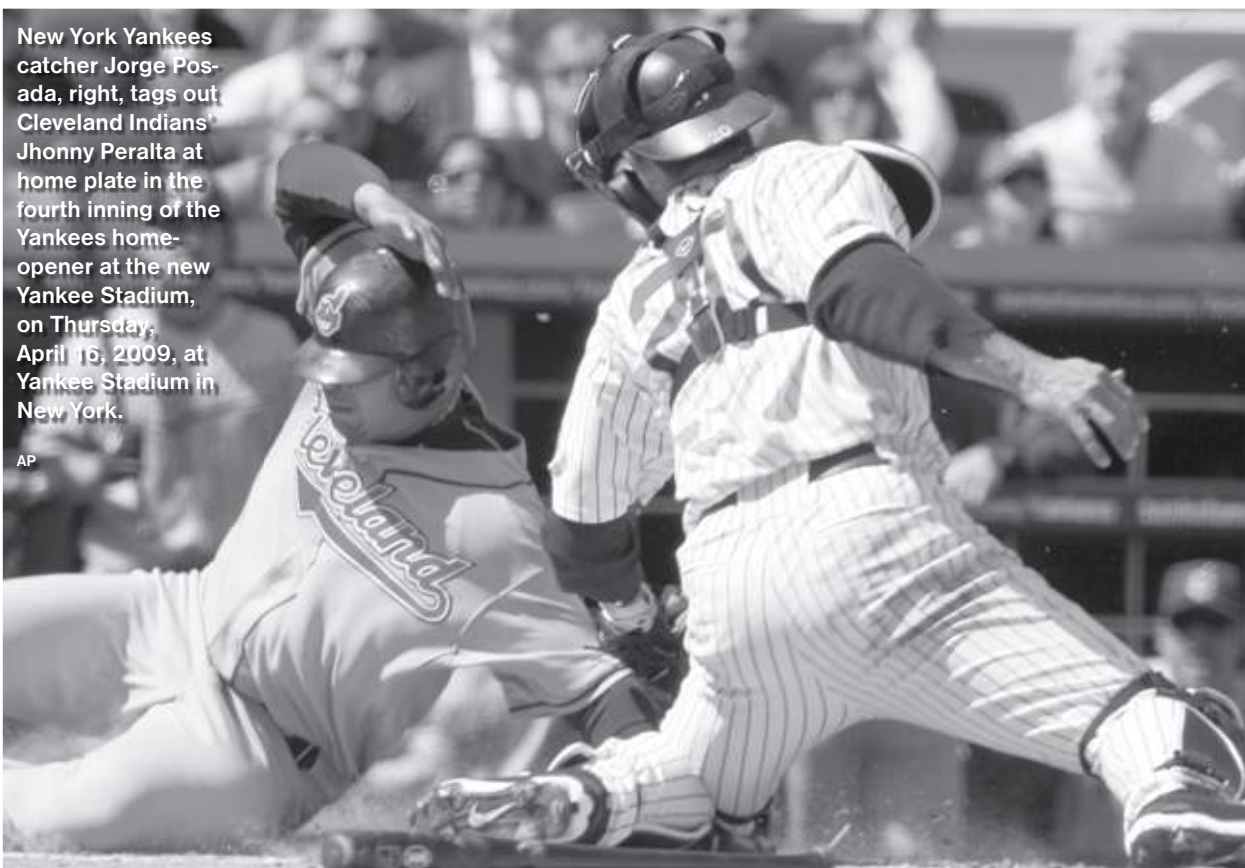
At Seattle, Joe Saunders stopped Seattle's early season joyride by allowing three hits and a run in seven innings and Mike Napoli hit a go-ahead, two-run single in a five-run sixth for Los Angeles.

Saunders' silencing of a lineup missing Ken Griffey Jr. for the third time this season dampened Seattle's celebration of Ichiro Suzuki breaking the record for hits by a Japanese player.

The eight-time All-Star and Gold

New York Yankees catcher Jorge Posada, right, tags out Cleveland Indians' Jhonny Peralta at home plate in the fourth inning of the Yankees home-opener at the new Yankee Stadium, on Thursday, April 16, 2009, at Yankee Stadium in New York.

AP



Glove outfielder broke the record of Isao Harimoto with a characteristically sharp single in the fourth, a one-hop smash into right field off Saunders (2-1) for his 3,086th hit. Harimoto, who played 23 seasons in Japan, smiled and flashed a thumbs-up sign from the box seats. Ichiro tipped his batting helmet to the cheering home crowd.

Seattle (7-3) had its six-game losing streak end but still is tied for its best start after 10 games in franchise history.

Blue Jays 9, Twins 2

At Minneapolis, Roy Halladay reared back and stifled the Twins again for seven dominant innings, and Toronto breezed past Minnesota.

Light-hitting leadoff man Marco Scutaro hustled home for a first-inning run off Francisco Liriano (0-3) and broke the game open with a two-run shot in a seven-run seventh highlighted by Kevin Millar's fourth career grand slam. Halladay improved to 8-0 with a 2.77 ERA in his career against the Twins.

Toronto won three of four in the series and has taken 12 of the past 13 from Minnesota. Halladay (3-0) allowed eight hits and struck out eight without a walk. The 6-foot-6 right-hander al-

lowed one run in the second inning via fielder's choice grounder.

Cardinals 7, Cubs 4

At Chicago, Chris Duncan atoned for some shoddy defense with a homer and three RBIs, and Yadier Molina drove in the go-ahead run that sent the St. Louis Cardinals to victory over the Chicago Cubs.

The Cardinals have won seven of their last eight and, perhaps more importantly, took the first of what will be 16 games against their longtime rivals.

Milton Bradley, who'd been on his best behavior since signing a \$30 million contract with the Cubs, argued a called third strike as a pinch-hitter with the bases loaded in the sixth inning and was ejected by umpire Larry Vanover.

Cardinals starter Adam Wainwright (2-0) then escaped the jam by getting Alfonso Soriano to fly out, leaving the score tied at 4.

Dodgers 7, Giants 2

At Los Angeles, Rafael Furcal hit a leadoff home run and the Los Angeles Dodgers won their fifth straight.

Eric Stults (2-0) allowed two runs and five hits, Casey Blake and pitch-

er Doug Mientkiewicz each had two RBIs, and Matt Kemp hit a run-scoring triple, helping send San Francisco to its sixth straight loss.

It's the first time the Giants have lost their first six road games since moving west with the Dodgers after the 1957 season. The last time they dropped their first six on the road was in 1947—the year Jackie Robinson made his big league debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Three-time All-Star Barry Zito (0-2) had another rough start, allowing six runs over five-plus innings on four hits and four walks. He also hit two batters and struck out four.

Padres 6, Mets 5

At New York, Chase Headley tied a career high with four hits and San Diego beat New York to win the first regular-season series at Citi Field.

Jake Peavy settled down after allowing Carlos Delgado's long three-run homer in the first and surprising San Diego held on for its sixth win in seven games. Former Mets reliever Heath Bell pitched a perfect ninth for his fifth save in five chances.

Delgado hit his third homer with one out in the first, sending a 3-0 pitch over

a billboard hanging above the bullpens in right-center. Ramon Castro hit a two-run shot off former teammate Duaner Sanchez in the eighth but that was it for New York.

Peavy (2-1) allowed three runs and six hits in five innings. He struck out five and walked four.

Nationals 8, Phillies 2

At Washington, Adam Dunn hit one of Washington's four homers, Shairon Martis threw 6 1-3 solid innings, and the Nationals avoided setting a club record for most consecutive losses to start a season.

Washington is 1-7; in the franchise's two-city history, only this edition and the 1998 Montreal Expos opened 0-7, according to STATS LLC.

Martis (1-0) gave up two runs and five hits in by the far the most effective performance by any member of Washington's young starting rotation in 2009. Mike Hinckley, Joe Beimel and Joel Hanrahan followed with 2 2-3 innings of perfect relief.

Marlins 6, Braves 2

At Atlanta, Cody Ross hit a three-run homer to snap out of an early slump, and Florida finished off its first three-game sweep in Atlanta.

Ross finished with three hits and four RBIs after beginning the day with a .115 average, helping Florida (8-1) get off to its best start since opening the 1997 season with eight wins in the first nine games.

The Marlins outscored the Braves 21-7 in the series. Florida had never swept a series of more than two games in Atlanta, and the last time that happened was May 13-14, 1997.

Anibal Sanchez (1-0) gave up eight hits and two runs in six innings to give Kenshin Kawakami (1-1) his first loss. Kawakami allowed five hits and five runs, four earned, in six innings.

Astros 6, Pirates 3

At Pittsburgh, Lance Berkman made up for an earlier missed opportunity with a go-ahead, three-run homer in the sixth inning, and Houston overcame an early two-run deficit to beat Pittsburgh.

Hunter Pence added a solo home run as the Astros won the final two games of the three-game series. Before that, they'd lost five straight during a 1-6 start, their worst in 25 seasons.

Alex Cejka leads Verizon Heritage



HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C.

(AP)—Alex

Cejka wants to

stay healthy this season. Playing his best golf wouldn't hurt, either.

Cejka, who missed more than three months last year because of neck surgery, shot his best round in nearly two years, a 7-under 64, to take a one-stroke lead at the Verizon Heritage on Thursday.

His bogey-free performance was capped by a 47-foot putt for birdie on the difficult, wind-swept 17th hole. That left Cejka with his first first-round lead since 2006, a shot ahead of two-time U.S. Open champion Lee Janzen and two in front of last year's Masters winner, Trevor Immelman.

"Just hopefully, everything stays well and I get healthy and practice hard," he said.

Cejka felt pain at the British Open last summer. Over the next month, he lost most of his strength on his left side. The diagnosis was a pinched nerve that required surgery last September to fuse vertebrae in his neck.

He only played sparingly until this season and his early results were not great, missing the cut three times in his first seven events.

Things perked up in March with a pair of 13th-place finishes at The Honda Classic and the Puerto Rico Open. The recovery took its biggest step yet at Harbour Town Golf Links.

He says he's about 85 percent healthy, but was pleased to manage Harbour Town's tiny, quick greens and

narrow, tree-lined fairways.

"You've got to be a little bit lucky on the small greens and stuff to hit them all," Cejka said. "But I hit good shots today."

Cejka's round took off on the back nine with four birdies on his last seven holes. He made a 37-footer for birdie on No. 12, then punched from under a tree to 15 feet on the 13th hole for another birdie. Another 15-foot birdie putt came on the par-5 15th before Cejka's shot two holes later.

He was thinking lag up for a par. "Then I hit a good putt a little bit firm and just hit the hole right in the middle," Cejka said with a smile.

Janzen, who won the U.S. Open in 1993 and 1998, posted his lowest opening round of the season. He had a chip for birdie on his final hole, the ninth,

that stopped a foot short of the cup.

"It looked like it was going in the hole, but never got there," he said.

Immelman wrapped up a rewarding, pressure-packed year that followed his 2008 Masters win.

He talked about his emotions playing his final few holes at Augusta National the bittersweet realization he'd no longer carry the distinction as the latest to wear the green jacket.

Immelman loved the respect and accolades that come from winning a major. Yet, he struggled at times after the victory trying to live up to his new profile.

"The way I look at it now, I can close the chapter on 2008," Immelman said. "It obviously was a breakthrough year for me. Now, I can take all that experience and put it to the test from now on."

Immelman came to his final hole, the ninth, a shot behind Cejka. However,

he put his approach shot over the green in a bunker and could not make par.

Many of the top players passed on Harbour Town, including Immelman's successor as Masters champion, Angel Cabrera.

Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson did not tee it up, either. Only six of the world's top 20 took part.

Boo Weekley's only two PGA Tour wins have been at Harbour Town the past two years and he dusted off the form he showed in 2007 and 2008.

Weekley, who chipped in on the 71st and 72nd holes to win here two years ago, did it again, this time from a bunker next to the par-5 second hole for an eagle to move four shots behind Cejka.

However, Weekley couldn't keep the momentum going and finished with a 69. Still, it was Weekley's eighth score in the 60s in nine career rounds here.

"I guess I got some kind of karma," Weekley said.

April King and Queen of the Lanes set

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES				
MLB STANDINGS				
AMERICAN LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	8	3	.727	-
Baltimore	6	3	.667	1
New York	5	5	.500	2 1/2
Tampa Bay	4	6	.400	3 1/2
Boston	3	6	.333	4
Central Division				
Chicago	5	4	.556	-
Detroit	5	4	.556	-
Kansas City	5	4	.556	-
Minnesota	4	7	.364	2
Cleveland	3	7	.300	2 1/2
West Division				
Seattle	7	3	.700	-
Los Angeles	4	5	.444	2 1/2
Oakland	4	5	.444	2 1/2
Texas	4	5	.444	2 1/2
NATIONAL LEAGUE				
East Division				
Florida	8	1	.889	-
Atlanta	5	4	.556	3
Philadelphia	4	4	.500	3 1/2
New York	4	5	.444	4
Washington	1	7	.125	6 1/2
Central Division				
St. Louis	8	3	.727	-
Chicago	5	4	.556	2
Cincinnati	4	4	.500	2 1/2
Pittsburgh	4	5	.444	3
Houston	3	6	.333	4
Milwaukee	3	6	.333	4
West Division				
Los Angeles	7	3	.700	-
San Diego	7	3	.700	-
Colorado	4	4	.500	2
Arizona	3	6	.333	3 1/2
San Francisco	2	7	.222	4 1/2
Yesterday's Games				
Cleveland 10, N.Y. Yankees 2				
Chicago White Sox 3, Tampa Bay 2				
Toronto 9, Minnesota 2				
L.A. Angels 5, Seattle 1				
Florida 6, Atlanta 2				
Houston 6, Pittsburgh 3				
St. Louis 7, Chicago Cubs 4				
Washington 8, Philadelphia 2				
San Diego 6, N.Y. Mets 5				
L.A. Dodgers 7, San Francisco 2				
VERIZON HERITAGE SCORES				
FIRST ROUND				
Alex Cejka	64			
Lee Janzen	65			
Trevor Immelman	66			
Ted Purdy	67			
Rod Pamplng	68			
Bill Haas	68			
Aron Price	68			
Stephen Leaney	68			
Tim Petrovic	68			
Cliff Kresge	68			
Jose Maria Olazabal	68			
Todd Hamilton	68			
Ernie Els	68			
Jeff Maggert	68			
Bob Estes	68			
Ken Duke	69			
Briny Baird	69			
Scott Piercy	69			
Dean Wilson	69			
Greg Owen	69			
Charles Howell III	69			
Boo Weekley	69			
Kevin Na	70			
Brandt Snedeker	70			
Zach Johnson	70			
Camilo Villegas	70			
Tommy Armour III	70			
Jason Dufner	70			
Matt Weibring	70			
John Mallinger	70			
Robert Garrigus	70			
Woody Austin	70			
Tom Lehman	70			

By The Associated Press



The Saipan Bowling Association and Budweiser will host the April King and Queen of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament this Sunday and Monday, April 19 and 20, at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose.

Sunday's roll-off begins at 3pm, while Monday's competition starts at 6pm. Registration starts 30 minutes prior to game time. Awarding ceremonies immediately follow the end of competition on Monday.

The competition is exclusive for SBA members with participants limited to the first 60 entries for each day.

MOMENT

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champion in the National Off-Road Bicycle Association.

Saipan resident Mieko Carey of Japan, who is competing in her second year as a pro, will use her familiarity of the course to stage the biggest surprise.

In the men's side, Mike Vine of Canada, the inaugural XTERRA Saipan winner back in 2002, is back to see if his magic still applies in the

IFC

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goal in the second half.

In the boys U13 division game at the Hopwood Junior High School Field, Paire slipped past MP United 2 Blue, 4-3.

Tae Min Jeong and Won Seok Jung scored two goals each for Paire to give their team a 2-0 record. Paire won its debut in the league, beating IFC, 1-0, on April 4.

Jake Lee scored all MP United 2 Blue's three goals against Paire.

Tan Holdings prevailed in the other U13 boys game, trouncing IFC 1, 3-0, while in the U13 girls,

AGUILAR

From Page 28

During the sessions he provided students of Gracie Barra Marianas with deeper technical knowledge and helped them close the gap on other techniques.

Founded in 2005 by sensei Caesar Whitt, Gracie Barra Marianas' lineage falls under grand master Carlos Gracie Jr. and instructionally under BJJ World Champion Marcio Feitosa, with whom Aguilar has also trained with.

From his deep sense of advancing the art, Aguilar pledged to work with Gracie Barra Marianas for more instructional visits either by himself or from any of his top students from the

DIVISION

From Page 28

But Huwa remained in the top of the standings with 35-21 win-loss mark.

Fotten Palau tied BwiiBwi's Shark Attack at second to third places with 31 victories and 25 defeats after the latter also lost to another underdog.

The Perfect Spotters defeated Shark Attack, 5-2, and climbed to fourth place with a 30-26 record.

At fifth spot are the D'Pirates 8 Ballers (28-28), which also dropped its game with a 3-4 count to sixth-

Members have the option to bowl on the Sunday or Monday, or on both days, provided that the \$15 entry fee is paid. Bowlers who did not bowl on Sunday will be given priority for the Monday shift. Only the higher score will count for the tournament. All participants have to pay the \$15 SBA annual membership fee.

The champion is guaranteed \$100 in prize money but it could go up to as much \$150 depending on the number of participants. Women participants will only have separate prizes if there are at least 10 entries.

Youth bowlers (12 to 18 years old), meanwhile, will duke it out in the Fiji

tropics. He'll have some stiff competition from last year's champ Aussie Andrew Noble, who won the PIC Double last year by winning both the local XTERRA and long-running Tagaman races.

England's Sam Gardner and Jimmy McConnell will return to try and unseat Noble and stay in front of Vine.

Gardner won last week's Guam race and XTERRA Japan in 2008.

Germany's Euro Tour racer Sasha Wingenfeld is making his first attempt at Saipan along with Philippine champion

IFC 2 defeated Matansa, 2-0.

MPU-1 White and MPU-3 Silver played an interclub match after the MPU-2 Blue vs. Paire game. A goal from Jehn Joyner in the second half gave MPU-3 Silver a 1-0 win.

In other results, MPU-1 and MPU Blue downed Tan Holdings and Paire, respectively, in the boys U8 division.

In the boys U10, Tan Holdings FC topped IFC-1.

Games in the spring youth league will resume this Saturday at various fields on Saipan.

The league will last for one more month before it holds a youth football festival last week of May. Around 500 kids are playing in the youth league, which also has com-

Philippines. His impression of Gracie Barra Marianas was that the students showed excellent discipline and fundamentals with many senior students impressing him at a higher level.

"There are some guys here who can go really far, we just need to continue to work hard," he said.

Aguilar's visit was made possible via personal contact by IT&E, a major sponsor of Gorilla Warfare MMA who sent the invitation to Aguilar and his wife Bubbles.

The visit allowed the Aguilar's to take a short respite from their own MMA promotional business in the Philippines, the famous URCC. As president and founder of the URCC—Universal Reality Combat Challenge—as well as

ranked USSP Watever (27-29).

BwiiBwi's Da Snipers became the only team in the Obyan Division that escaped the wrath of the underdogs, prevailing over cellar dweller VFW Warriors, 4-3.

Da Snipers improved their record to 25-31, while the Warriors further went down to 17-39.

In the Agingan Division, the Do-como Hustlers triumphed as it hosted corporate rival IT&E Voyagers, 4-3, wining four of the five singles before dropping the two doubles matches.

Despite the loss, the Voyagers are still on top of the division standings with its 33-16 win-loss card. The Hus-

Water Prince and Princess of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament in Day 1 of the monthly competition. Entry fee is \$10 for the Fiji Water Prince and Princess of the Lanes.

Youth bowlers must also pay the annual SBA youth membership fee of \$10 if they wish to qualify for the annual roll off.

The Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament aims to crown 12 monthly champions through the course of the year.

For early registration and payment, see or contact Gigi or Ross Zapanta at 288-5627 or email zapanta@pticom.com. (SBA)

Arland Macasieb, now living in New Jersey, and Ulli Katzer of Austria.

Longtime XTERRA competitor Taro Shirato will join along with Takahiro Ogasawara who has finished second twice in Japan.

For the past seven years, the total number of pros competing on Saipan was 45, including the three newcomers this year.

Except for Jim Vance of the USA, all five others pros who competed last year are returning including Bucher, Carey, Noble, Ogasawara, and Shirato.

petition in the U4 division.

The U4 division has two teams from MP United and one from Paire, while U6 features nine teams, three from MP United, two from Paire, two from Matansa, and one each from Independents and Tan Holdings FC.

The U8 and U10 division have 10 teams each. MP United and Paire have three teams apiece in U8, Matansa has two, and Independents and Tan Holdings FC have one each. In U10, Matansa has three teams, MP United, Paire, and Independents have two apiece, and Tan Holdings has one.

The U4, U6, U8, and U10 age groups have co-ed teams, while U13 and U18 have separate competitions for boys and girls.

a self defense instructor for the Philippine Armed Forces among many others, Aguilar has little time for himself making his visit a truly unique opportunity.

The tandem of IT&E and Gorilla Warfare made sure the Aguilar's first visit to Saipan was both a memorable and pleasurable experience by making room for scenic visits, water sports, nights out at Saipan's hot spots, and a VIP appearance at the wildly successful "Battle Ready" MMA event held last March 28.

For more information on enrolling with Gracie Barra Marianas Academy, contact Russ Ada at 285-0372 or Francis Mendiola at 287-6700. The academy instructs teens and adults and also has a thriving kids class aimed at discipline, self-control and overall health. (PR)

tlers climbed to second at 31-18.

Billy Bones Home Boys scored a huge win against its sister team Bad Boyz, 6-1, clinching four of the five singles and the two doubles.

The Homes Boys are now tied with Utopia Mix Acers at 28-21, while the Bad Boyz are at the bottom with a 13-36 record.

The visiting Mix Acers won over host Snicker Tuna 8 Ball Knights, 5-2.

The Mix Acers rallied from a 1-2 deficit by taking the last two singles as well as the doubles and improved to a 28-21 record, good for fourth place. Knights, meanwhile, fell to 19-30.



As playoffs start, does a LeBron-Kobe final await?

When Kobe Bryant was last seen in the playoffs, he was hopeless and helpless as his Los Angeles Lakers were being run over in Boston in Game 6 of the NBA finals. **25**

Saipan Tribune Sports

Yanks open new stadium with 10-2 loss

After an 85-year-run in a stadium that produced 26 World Series titles, New York saw its hitters fizzle and its bullpen come apart on a sunny Thursday afternoon in a 10-2 loss to the Cleveland Indians. **26**



28 SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2009

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Moment of truth for XTERRA pros

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

It will be the moment of truth for the 13 professional triathletes as they challenge the punishing course today in the 8th XTERRA Saipan Championships.

The race will start at 6am with the 1,500-meter swim in the waters of Micro Beach.

From there, the bike heads up to Navv Hill over to Wireless

Road and down to Talofoto through Egigi Drive and Bananarama.

The bikers will climb up to Mount Tapochao then go down again through Navy Hill via Chinatown and to Beach Road and back to Micro Beach.

For the run, they will leave Micro Beach through Anaks going up above Garapan and down to Navy Hill and pass through the caves in the Chinatown Ravine.



A row of triathletes run along the beach during the swim portion of last year's 7th XTERRA Saipan Championship at the American Memorial Park.

MARK RABAGO

Through Chinatown, the runners will head down to the beach just north of the Fishing Base and all the way back to the Micro Beach for the finish line.

Today's race is expected to be one of the closest in the history of the XTERRA Saipan, both in the men's and women's divisions.

The world-class field includes Julie Dibens of Great Britain, the two-time XTERRA Maui world champion who is coming back to challenge four-time XTERRA Saipan title-holder Renata Bucher of Switzerland.

Dibens' losses came against Bucher, a.k.a. Little Swiss Miss, who beat the Brit in France in 2007 and on Saipan in 2008.

Out to challenge the dynamic duo is American Shonny Vanlanginham, who won the U.S. XTERRA Championship last year.

The Saipan series is heavily weighted toward the bike and Vanlanginham will definitely use her lofty billing as a 15-time

See **MOMENT** on Page 27

IFC, Paire split games; MPU downs Matansa

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Action in the U18 division of the 2009 NMIFA Spring Youth Football League began Saturday at the CPA Field with Paire Football Club and Independents Football Club splitting their games.

IFC's U18 boys team prevailed over Paire FC, 2-1, while Paire bounced back in the U18 girls division with a 2-0 victory.

Willie Brana scored first for IFC, making a goal in the ninth minute. IFC led at 2-0 at half-time after Charles McEntee canned a goal in the 21st minute. Paire broke into the scoreboard with a goal from Dakota Vangelov in the 51st minute.

In the other boys U18 match, MP United blanked Matansa FC, 4-0, behind the three goals of Neri Gutzwiller-Malakut. Bo Barry scored the other goal for MP United.

In the U18 girls division, Madison Schultz and Zoe Jewell knocked down one goal apiece to prevent IFC from sweeping Paire.

In the other U18 girls game, Matansa FC downed MP United, 1-0, on Deveney Dela Cruz's

See **IFC** on Page 27



An IFC U131 player kicks the ball during their game against Matansa in the 2009 NMIFA Spring Youth Football League Saturday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

One of the Philippines' most distinguished and decorated martial arts instructors, Alvin Aguilar, demonstrates a body control technique.

Aguilar promises to work with Gracie Barra Marianas



Gracie Barra Marianas Academy received a large dose of high-end instruction last March as the academy was visited by one of the Philippines' most dis-

tinguished and decorated martial arts instructors, Alvin Aguilar.

A Brazilian jiu-jitsu black belt, Aguilar held two private instructional sessions at the As Lito-based martial arts facility.

See **AGUILAR** on Page 27

Division leaders fall to underdogs in 8-ball

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Division leaders D'Pirates Huwa in Obyan and IT&E Voyagers in Agingan lost to their respective underdog rivals last Tuesday night in the 2009 Budweiser 8-Ball League.



USSP Fo-tten Palau nailed its biggest win of the season by beating D'Pirates Huwa, 5-2. It won four of the five singles matches and one of two doubles.

See **DIVISION** on Page 27